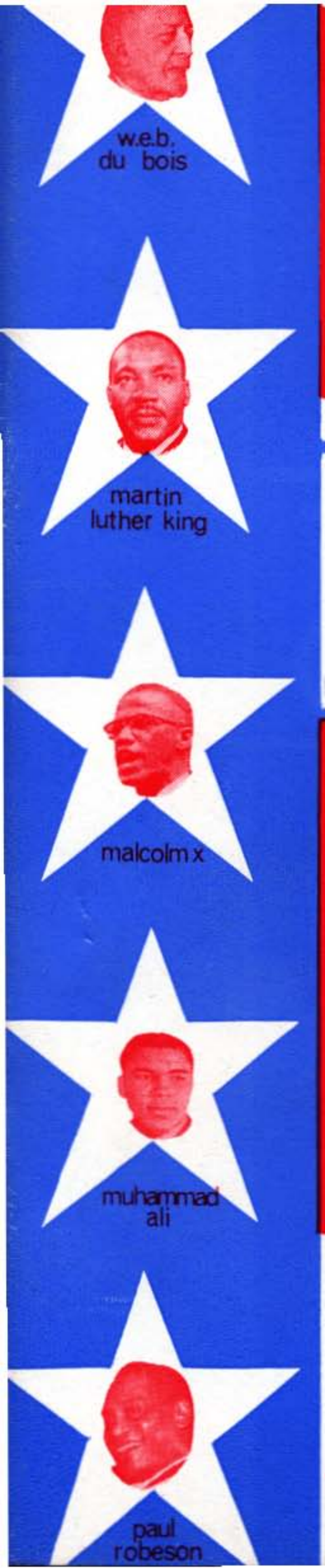

ALSO: Latin America and Regis Debray—an analysis

The African Communist

NO 33—SECOND QUARTER 1968

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The writings of Regis Debray, jailed revolutionary who accompanied Che Guevara in his last campaign, have stimulated widespread international discussion. The South African Marxist, Joe Slovo, submitted Debray's ideas to a comradely but searching criticism in a lecture delivered in London. At the request of our Editorial Board he amplified his lecture-notes for publication in the African Communist.

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SEAN REDMOND

1968 marks the centenary of the birth of James Connolly, outstanding Marxist and Irish patriot, who was shot by the British imperialists for his part in the Easter Rising of 1916. Sean Redmond, writer of this tribute, is General Secretary of the Connolly Association, an organisation of Irishmen and women living in Britain.

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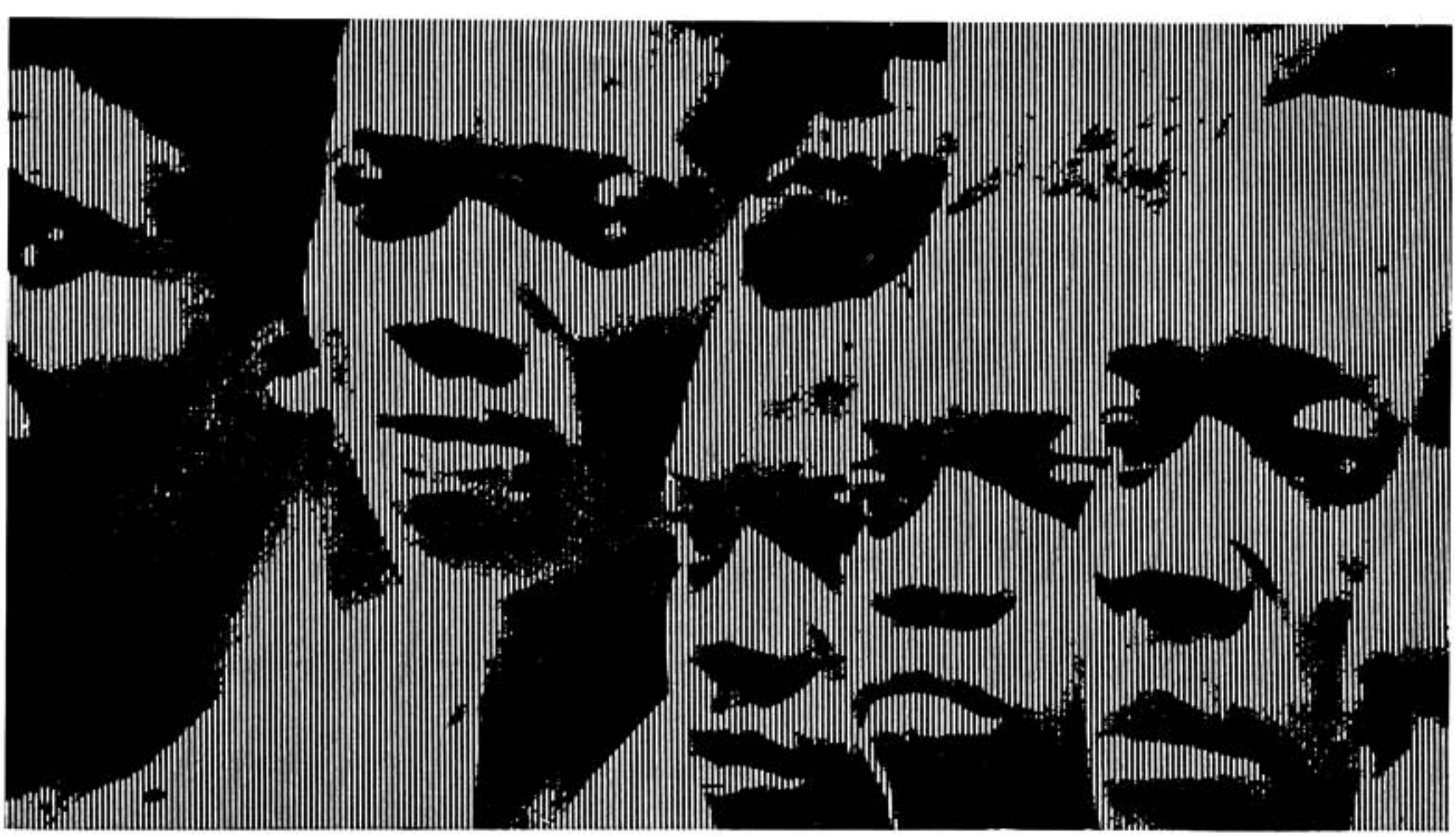

Editorial Notes:

THE BURNING QUESTION

Can a small country, which relies mainly on its own strength, defeat . . . the American imperialists, the arch-imperialists, who possess great material and economic potentials? This is the burning question of our times. The Vietnamese people are answering it with their victories, which are their great contribution to the peoples of the world.

GENERAL VO NGUYEN GIAP.

VIETNAM! The very name has become the banner and the anthem of the people of the whole world. The workers, peasants, oppressed nations, revolutionary youth, all who love the human spirit love Vietnam. We love the people of this far-away land as if they were our own brothers and sisters; we weep when their children are maimed and killed, and their cities and food destroyed by the imperialist bombers. We rejoice at the audacious achievements of their fighters, inflicting staggering

defeats on the huge million-strong army of the Yankees and their stooges, carrying out brilliantly-organised and synchronised risings in Saigon and scores of other enemy-occupied strongholds, shooting down thousands of invading planes from the Northern skies.

What is the secret of the Vietnamese—the fierce pride and spirit of independence that will never accept submission or defeat, the heroism and endurance of the fighting men and women, as well as of the 'civilian' population (there are in actuality no civilians in Vietnam!); the consummate mastery of tactics?

The answer is given by General Giap, Minister of Defence of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam:

> Our great national salvation resistance, glowing with its just cause, has enjoyed correct political and military doctrine and the united strength of our people.
>
> —*Big Victory, Great Task.*

Vietnam is neither a large nor a wealthy country. Yet she humbled the mighty power of imperial France; her incredibly tough resistance to the richest and biggest of capitalist countries, the U.S.A., has weathered the fiercest and most atrocious aggression ever, and precipitated an unprecedented crisis—political, economic and social—in that country and in the whole imperialist complex of which the U.S.A. is the heart.

Can the Vietnamese people survive? Can they win their independence, freedom and unity to which their long and bitter years of struggle so richly entitle them? That indeed is 'the burning question of our times'.

At the time of writing these Notes, the immediate issue still hangs in the balance. LBJ, the most hated man since Hitler, has been forced to announce his forthcoming retirement, to announce a 'partial suspension' of bombing in the North and a readiness to hold 'peace talks' with Hanoi. But he is still in the saddle. Bombing in the Democratic Republic has in fact been intensified in degree; more American troops are being sent to the South; one proposed venue for talks after another is dismissed as 'unsuitable' by Washington. The Americans will no doubt continue for some time longer to spill blood, including that of their own young men, and squander wealth in a futile attempt to accomplish the impossible and conquer the unconquerable. Bad losers, they have not yet learnt, as France and Britain had perforce to learn before them, the art of graceful withdrawal.

But, essentially, and from a long term viewpoint, they have already lost. The sweeping victories of the People's Liberation Armed Forces, coupled with massive uprisings through enemy-occupied territory including all the major cities in the South have shattered American claims that they are there to help some sort of Vietnamese government

to repel aggression. With massive desertions taking place among the puppet forces and administration—including many who previously supported the Saigon stooge regime merely because they thought it would be the winning side—the U.S. forces are being virtually stripped of their 'native levies' and left alone to face the hatred and anger of the people whose land they have invaded. As President Ho Chi Minh wrote in his congratulatory message to the N.L.F. 'Nothing can save the American aggressors and their lackeys from total collapse'.

The epic resistance of this small but unvanquishable people has stirred the conscience of the world to an unprecedented degree. It is true, as President Ho has said: 'The whole socialist camp and progressive mankind give us their sympathy and support.' It is also true that in defending their motherland, the Vietnamese patriots are rendering an unforgettable, indeed a disproportionate service to mankind, as they are clearly aware—a 'great contribution to the peoples of the world'.

It is impossible fully to catalogue the extent of this contribution. As we have written in this journal before, there are many countries in Africa which owe to the sacrifices and struggles of the poor peasants of Vietnam the freedom and independence which they enjoy today. The famous victory of Bien Dien Phu opened the way to the collapse of the Western European colonial system; just as now the Vietnamese are holding the pass for the entire socialist camp; are absorbing an ever-growing proportion of U.S. resources in a bottomless quagmire. The arrogant, would-be world policeman which seeks to impose its own domination, allied with local reactionary forces, United States imperialism, has struck a rock—Vietnam.

Above all, Fighting Vietnam is an inspiring demonstration to all the oppressed peoples who strive for freedom. It is a living proof that given unity, determination and clear political leadership, the working people can overcome the enemy, despite his formidable economic might, his bombing planes and horror weapons.

It is precisely this lesson which inspires our own heroic fighters of Southern Africa in their steadily advancing fight for freedom.

DEEP INTO ZIMBABWE

The fighting in Zimbabwe is becoming far more widespread and serious.

Following the sensational events of August last, which marked the opening of the long-term, strategic war of liberation launched jointly by the Z.A.P.U./A.N.C. military alliance, the apparent lull seemed to lend colour to claims by the Smith and Vorster regimes that they had 'wiped out' the freedom-fighters, whom they describe as 'terrorists'.

The new March offensive which is still in progress at the time of writing (mid-April) has given the lie to these claims. It is clear that the guerillas, far from having been 'wiped out' have firmly established themselves since the fighting of last summer (in the South of course summer is at its height in December).

The area of fighting is in Karoi, Miami and Sinoia, deep in Zimbabwe territory and not far from the capital, Salisbury.

White settler farmers and their families have been evacuated from these areas. By mid-March the administrative centre of Miami had been overrun by guerillas (Communiqué* March 19th). Thousands of Rhodesian infantrymen and South African army personnel had been flung into the battle, and have been suffering heavy casualties—far more than the comparative light casualties of the freedom-fighters who strike and then merge into the environment.

By March 19th thirty-three casualties were reported in the Communiqué, as well as hits on two aircraft and one helicopter, which the guerilla command believed to have crashed. A further communiqué on April 10th reported heavy enemy casualties 'sustained in fighting . . . around Dande area'. South African soldiers alone killed in this battle amounted to forty-two.

The Smith and Vorster regimes are still doing their best to conceal the extent of the fighting and especially of their casualties. Funerals are held secretly. 'On Friday, April 5th, six Rhodesian army officers were buried in Salisbury in hush-hush conditions.' Bodies of South African soldiers were 'flown first to the Wankie mortuary and then to South Africa via Caprivi' (Communiqué, April 10th). Hospitals in Karoi and Sinoia have been commandeered by the military 'to make way for the large casualties suffered by the enemy'. (Communiqué, March 27th.)

Very little such news is permitted to appear in the Rhodesian and South African press about the fighting. An East London (Cape) newspaper reported:

> The terrorist battle has now been raging for two weeks without an end in sight. *Very little information is available to Rhodesians.*
> Hundreds of men are tied up in the drought-stricken bush, prey to sickness, insects and snakebite. The cost is mounting. Numbers of civilian territorials have been called up.
>
> *Daily Dispatch*, March 30th, 1968.

What is most deeply disturbing to the white supremacy regimes is that the African guerillas are being 'harboured' (i.e., warmly welcomed

---

* Reference throughout is to the Joint Communiqués issued by Z.A.P.U. of Zimbabwe and the A.N.C. of South Africa.

and supported) by the local population. This means that the Rhodesians are steadily losing their tenuous hold they maintain over the African masses by means of massive terror and intimidation. The war in Zimbabwe is steadily developing into a people's revolution. The Communiqués, laconic and not given to overstatement, speak of 'enthusiastic support of the Z.A.P.U.-A.N.C. guerilla forces by the African population everywhere'. (April 10th.) 'Throughout Zimbabwe the African people are giving militant support to the freedom fighters' (March 27th).

The Smith regime has passed from 'appeals' and threats to the Africans against harbouring the guerillas to reprisal air-raids on villages in guerilla-held territory. The experience of the Americans in Vietnam should have taught them the suicidal nature of such methods, which merely strengthen the unity and fighting spirit of the masses and intensify their hatred of the oppressors.

It is not only for the purpose of keeping up home morale (and foreign confidence) that the Vorster and Smith regimes are deliberately concealing details about the fighting in Zimbabwe.

There is another—and profoundly sinister—motive.

All the official handouts from Salisbury and Pretoria speak of 'infiltrators' crossing the Zambesi River, which divides Zambia and Zimbabwe (the so-called British colony of Rhodesia). They attempt to give the impression that the fighting is in the Zambesi Valley and that the guerillas are crossing to and fro from Zambia.

This is a downright lie.

The fighting is taking place deep in Rhodesia, 'some sixty miles north-west of Salisbury and not in the Zambesi Valley.' (Communiqué, April 9th, 1968.)

There is no process of guerillas 'returning to Zambia'. Nor are the freedom-fighters 'directed' from that country. 'We wish to make it absolutely clear that the command of our guerilla forces is permanently internal, with obligations to carry on and expand the guerilla attacks on the White oppressors without mercy or retreat.' (The same Communiqué.)

The purpose of the Smith and Vorster claims is twofold.

In the first place, they wish to conceal the fact that the resistance movement has taken root; that it is home-based and there to stay.

In the second place, they are keeping their options open for the desperate policy advocated by some of the extreme adventurers in the ruling circles of both countries—a war of aggression (in the guise of 'retaliation') against Zambia, and possibly even Tanzania and other African states as well.

Their model for such a mad strategy is the U.S. air attack on North

Vietnam and the Israeli terrorist aggressions against Jordan and other Arab states.

'Provocation can lead to hard retaliation,' said P. W. Botha, South African Minister of Defence, speaking in Parliament on April 3rd.

He went so far as to speak approvingly of the 'analogy' of Israel, making 'retaliatory raids against terrorist training centres in Jordan'.

It is precisely to prepare the way for such an outrageous war of aggression against African states to the north, that Smith and Vorster's propaganda machines are spreading the false reports of 'infiltration' across the border.

We may note, in passing, that fabricated and mendacious claims by the breakaway 'Z.A.N.U.' organisation that it had launched an attack across the Zambesi, serve—knowingly or not—to feed such propaganda.

Aggression by the apartheid state against African countries would be an act of final lunacy, which could only hasten the inevitable downfall of the remnants of European colonialism in Africa—the rule of Vorster, Smith and Salazar over the South.

But it should not, for that reason, be dismissed as impossible or even improbable.

From madmen one must expect lunacy.

Zambia, Tanzania, and all of Africa must strengthen their defences and be on guard.

EXERCISE IN SERVILITY

The Trade Union Council of South Africa, predominantly composed of unions of privileged white workers, has for years played the sorry role of an agent of apartheid and the fascist government.

As a 'workers' organisation' it had, and used to the full, the opportunity to make contact with trade union and labour organisations abroad. It made use of these contacts to make excuses for apartheid and to oppose boycotts, sanctions and other forms of international solidarity action with the oppressed people of South Africa.

Some years ago to improve its international standing—and also to attempt to undermine the South African Congress of Trade Unions—T.U.C.S.A. decided to amend its colour-bar constitution to admit unions of African workers. Nearly all these unions, however, stuck to their principles and to S.A.C.T.U.

Last December, however, T.U.C.S.A. decided to restore its original colour bar.

But what about those few African unions who had, for the sake of some financial assistance, swallowed their principles and affiliated to T.U.C.S.A.?

Mrs. Lucy Mvubelo, General Secretary of the National Union of Clothing Workers, spoke for herself in a statement at the Special Conference of T.U.C.S.A. last December, when the decision was taken to exclude African unions.

She assured the White unions which were preparing to expel her union and others, simply because of their racial composition, that they were 'loyal South Africans', who 'will never play any part in introducing foreign ideologies into our workers' organisations' and 'we are totally opposed to boycotts of our country or any other forms of active outside intervention'.

'The African unions who were guided by T.U.C.S.A. were able to steer completely free of politics and any sort of political ideology.'

But now that T.U.C.S.A. doesn't want them any more, Mrs. Mvubelo said, the Africans would immediately disaffiliate and resign.

'We believe that this is the correct thing to do in order to save the Council any further embarrassment through our continued association.' (*Garment Worker*, Vol. 10, No. 2.)

We wonder if any African trade unionist or patriot can read these nauseating remarks without feeling physically ill. 'Please excuse me, my baas; I see you don't want me and I'm sorry to embarrass you. Thank you very much for kicking me.'

There are some unpleasant facts we all have to face. One of them is that the whites would not be ruling South Africa and behaving as they do, if it were not for the fact that some of our people still think and act like slaves.

TOWARDS COMMUNIST UNITY

Repeatedly, over recent years, this journal and the South African Communist Party have called for the consolidation of the vanguard, Marxist-Leninist Parties of the world. We believe that this is the first essential step towards rallying all progressive forces against the globally-planned offensive of imperialism, spearheaded by the American monopolists; towards more effective support for Vietnam and all victims of colonialism, racialism and oppression; towards a future of peace, democracy and socialism.

That is why we warmly welcome the consultative meeting of sixty-seven Communist and Workers' Parties held in Budapest at the end of February, in which our Party also participated.

The meeting decided that a preparatory commission, consisting of representatives of all Parties which wish to take part, will organise a world Communist Conference in Moscow at the end of this year.

A notable factor in the success of the Budapest consultation, both

before and during the meeting, was the tireless patience and single-minded diligence of the convener: the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party.

The democratic and comradely spirit which prevailed at Budapest justifies the highest expectations that the Conference itself will make a notable and constructive contribution towards the cause of the world's workers and oppressed peoples.

It is true that a number of Marxist-Leninist Parties were for widely differing reasons unable, or in some cases unwilling, to attend the consultation. But the door is open, and it is greatly to be hoped that many more, if not all, the Parties will still find it possible to come to the Conference itself.

No one expects that the Moscow Conference will be able at once to resolve the deep differences which have revealed themselves in the Communist ranks. Nor is that its purpose, as we see it. The purpose is rather to establish a basis for common action in the present situation of world imperialist crisis, of aggression, international conspiracy and threats of war. We believe that united action on immediate and urgent issues now, including the crucial questions facing the peoples of Africa, will open the way to ever-closer unity, both within and beyond the Communist movement.

Seen in this light, the Conference is not an end in itself only. It is also a highly important step in the process of revitalising the internationalism to which Marx and Lenin devoted their lives.

HOMAGE TO KARL MARX

KARL MARX was born 150 years ago, on May 5th, 1818. All over the world his memory is being celebrated by the leaders of the working class and progressive mankind.

To mark the occasion, our journal will publish a special article on the life and contribution of Karl Marx, founder of the modern Communist movement, in our next issue.

OUR PEOPLE IN THE U.S.A.

Some thoughts on the Africans in America

A. LERUMO

I. THE KILLING OF MARTIN LUTHER KING

The white imperialist establishment in the U.S.A. killed the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, just as surely as apartheid South Africa killed Chief Albert John Lutuli.

Sure, the C.I.A. and the F.B.I. can disclaim responsibility for the unknown assassin or conspirator who pointed the rifle and pulled the trigger. (But why, after daily threats—and several attempts—had been made against his life, wasn't Dr. King adequately guarded? Why were the Klan allowed, practically in public, to incite and plot his murder? Isn't it true that the police and espionage machinery in the States are themselves riddled with Birchites, Klansmen and other fascist scum?)

Certainly, Vorster can state smugly that Lutuli's death was due to an unpredictable accident when he was knocked down by a railway engine. (But why was our Chief refused permission for long months to leave Groutville for Durban to receive specialised hospital treatment for his failing health, including grave impairment to his failing hearing and eyesight? Why, for that matter, was the Chief condemned for long years of living death—a national leader confined to a tiny Natal reserve, forbidden to speak to his people or even write for publication?)

Maybe a long time will elapse before we are able to learn in full the immediate physical facts and circumstances about the death of these two great African leaders.

But the truth lies deeper than these details.

Hypocritical tributes were paid by top politicians and editorialists to the dead leaders—already, the day after their deaths, seeking to distort their ideas and bury their militancy and revolutionary ideas. In each case the truth is that the bourgeoisie hated and feared the leaders who had emerged from among the oppressed Africans. Their arrant white chauvinism could not live with the plain fact that our people had produced leaders of infinitely greater stature than Johnson, Vorster or any of the other petty mediocrities who dominate Washington and Pretoria. Men whose world moral stature (symbolised by the Nobel Peace Prize awards), courage, intelligence and integrity dwarfed and exposed the unprincipled careerists, manipulators and frauds who parade as statesmen in this period of imperialism's decline and degeneracy.

Whatever may be said about his concept of non-violent struggle, Dr. King had emerged as one of the greatest leaders of the Afro-American people over the past decade of reassertion of their national identity, dignity and rights, in the face of the vicious colonial-type oppression which is the lot of black people in the United States of America. From the bus-boycott in Birmingham, Alabama to the great March on Washington in August 1963 and the strike of Selma dustmen which he was leading at the time of his murder, Dr. King had identified himself unreservedly with the strivings and aspirations of the most oppressed section of his people. He had committed all his great gifts of learning and understanding, his marvellous oratory, courage and integrity to the cause of Negro emancipation.

Dr. King's passionate pride in and love for his own people was not of the narrow sort that expresses itself in hatred and contempt for others. He took his stand—against the advice of the petty-bourgeois Negro nationalists and compromising white liberals who for too long had dominated the Civil Rights movement—uncompromisingly against the unjust and barbarous war the U.S. is conducting in Vietnam. He spoke up for and identified himself with the struggle of the oppressed peoples of Southern Africa against apartheid and white domination.

It is notable, especially in his last years, that when he spoke in public on broad public issues he never adopted the stance of a spokesman of a minority group—fearful, as such spokesmen often are, of straying beyond the limited issues of their community, or of offending the accepted shibboleths of the Establishment. He spoke in his own right as a major American statesman. And nothing was more irritating to the Establishment than the freedom with which he struck out against the major lies with which the brain-washers ensure mental servility among Americans. This applies in particular to the lie that Communism is something unspeakable, anti-American, treasonable.

Not long before his assassination, Dr. King was the principal speaker at the meeting held at the end of February to launch the DuBois Centennial Year, marking the 100th anniversary of the greaf Afro-American historian, Africanist, freedom-fighter and Communist. Amidst tumultuous applause, Dr. King said:

> *It is time to cease muting the fact that Dr. DuBois was a genius and chose to be a Communist. Our irrational, obsessive anti-Communism has led us into too many quagmires.*
> *We can't talk of Dr. DuBois without recognising that he was a radical all of his life. Some people would like to ignore the fact that he was a Communist in his later years. It is worth noting that Abraham Lincoln warmly welcomed the support of Karl Marx during the Civil War and corresponded with him freely.*
> *In contemporary life the English-speaking world has no difficulty with the fact that Sean O'Casey was a literary giant of the twentieth century, and a Communist . . . Pablo Neruda is generally considered the greatest living poet, though he served in the Chilean Senate as a Communist . . .*

These words were characteristic of the integrity of Martin Luther King's thinking, his outspoken honesty and courage. It was for this that his people, and all advanced mankind loved him and followed; it was for this too that white racist imperialism hated him and killed him.

Martin Luther King knew he was going to die. He stood in daily danger of the assassin's bullet in the sick society that is the United States today. He told the last rally he ever addressed, in the beautiful rhetoric, filled with scriptural allusions, of which he was a master, that he had 'been up on the mountain' and looked into the 'Promised Land' of freedom that was his dream . . . but he would not be there to lead his people into it. 'I am not afraid of any man', he said. But his audience was fully aware of his meaning; that he spoke as one about to die. He ended his oration with the opening words of the stirring American anthem, dating from the Civil War, 'The Battle Hymn of the Republic':

> *Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord*

No doubt many of those present, who went away with those words ringing in their minds, added also those which follow:

> *He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored,*
> *He has loosed the fateful lightning of his terrible swift sword,*
> *His truth is marching on.*

None could have realised the prophetic appositeness of the quotation and the oration; how soon the premonition of death would be realised; with what 'terrible swiftness' the assassin's bullet would unleash a fearful fury throughout the United States, that erupted immediately in spontaneous uprisings in cities all over the States, that has not by any means been spent and will not be quelled until the cause for which the martyr laid down his life has overcome.

2. BLACK POWER AND THE GHETTO UPRISINGS

'After the man of peace comes the man of blood.' The storm that swept through the United States following the dastardly crime at Memphis saw many forms of protest, including scenes of fire and violence as tens of thousands of youth in the Negro ghettoes swept into the streets in spontaneous uprisings to express their anger and vengeance. Troops were called out; in the capital, Washington, the White House was guarded and barricaded as though it were the American Embassy in Saigon.

According to *The Worker* (New York), thirty-nine were killed in these demonstrations—all but five were Negroes. Millions of dollars worth of property were destroyed in fires. (The Mayor of Newark, Ardonizio, said many of the fires were started by white, anti-Negro groups.)

These outbursts of violent rebellion are nothing new in the United States. For the past two years each summer has brought forth uprisings in the black ghettoes of many major American cities, accompanied by burning of buildings, looting, and pitched battles between Afro-American freedom-fighters on the one hand and police and troops on the other. According to Claude Lightfoot (*Black Power and Liberation**) by the end of 1967 there had already been 150 outbreaks of violence in more than 120 cities.

Over 270 million dollars in property has been destroyed. It is estimated that 118 people have been killed and nearly 4,000 injured. Roughly 4,000 have been arrested and National Guardsmen have been called out 23 times.

Undoubtedly these outbursts constitute in essence a massive revolt of the African-descended people of the United States, protesting against intolerable injustice and oppression. Some have gone further, to see in these manifestations the beginnings of a revolution in the U.S.A., and urging that they be extended, organised and transformed into an armed struggle for 'Black Power'.

The slogan 'Black Power' has made a dynamic appeal to the sons

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* New Outlook Publishers, New York, 1967

and daughters of Africa in the United States and elsewhere, descendants of the millions transported to the 'New World' as slaves for the cotton fields and sugar plantations.

Like most mass slogans it means different things to different people —perhaps that is one of the secrets of the success of such slogans. The liberation struggle in South Africa has produced such a striking slogan —*Amandla Ngawethu!*—*Maatla ke Arona!*—The Strength is Ours! —Power to the People! To the masses the simple words convey a simple meaning—the majority of the people of our country should rule it. But to those who want fuller enlightenment as to its practical, programmatic significance the answer is there: the Freedom Charter, common programme of the liberationist, and of the revolutionary labour and democratic movements of our country.

In America, there is no such widely-accepted and generally agreed common programme and interpretation of the slogan *Black Power*. Stokeley Carmichael, Rap Brown, Floyd McKissick and other radical leaders who have emerged from 'SNICK' (Student Non-Violent Co-ordinating Committee) have ranged from interpretations which emphasise the winning of political office (e.g., Negro Congressmen, Mayors, etc.) in areas where Afro-Americans form a significant or majority section of the electorate (and in this direction, following the bitter struggle to get black people the right to enrol as voters, there have been significant advances) to outright demands for independence and seccession from the United States of Southern and other areas predominantly inhabited by African-descended people. To others, the slogan is meant to draw a line between advocates of violence and their opponents—but here too there is no agreement. For example Dr. King while upholding the concept of 'Black Power' was, as is well known, an opponent of violent methods of struggle.

Naturally there have been many, both within and outside the U.S.A., who have sought to *impose* upon this slogan their own predetermined concept of what they think 'black power' ought to mean. To those who respect the right of an oppressed people to determine their own programme, strategy and tactics, such an approach seems patronising, presumptuous and opportunistic. Clearly a great debate is raging right now, north and southland, in urban ghettoes and rural areas, on the campus and in the workshop and in the streets on just these programmatic and strategic issues. The Negro people, we are confident, will hammer out the right answers in practice; what seems urgent now for us in Africa is not to offer good advice—we are no more competent, without a detailed knowledge of local conditions, to offer guidance to our brothers than they are to guide us!—but to seek to understand and to help.

What is the real social content of the sweeping upsurge reflected in the movement sweeping the country, its actions ranging from strikes, boycotts, marches and civil disobedience to violent uprisings, its slogans such as 'Freedom Now!' and 'Black Power!'?

No doubt, many class and ideological currents, some of them contending, go to make up these actions and slogans. But it would be fair to summarise the total of all these currents under two main headings:

First: A protest against intolerable oppression, discrimination, indignity and poverty; a demand for justice.

Second: An assertion of national identity, pride, brotherhood and unity.

3. THE NATURE OF NEGRO OPPRESSION

It is of course impossible even to begin to list the mountainous injustices heaped upon the heads of our brethren in America in an article of this sort. Indeed there can be few readers of this journal who are not familiar at least to some extent with the centuries-old tale of cruelty, exploitation, bitterness and suffering that has been the lot of the black man there from the times of slavery right up to the present day.

The story has been told again and again by publicists, scholars and historians, both black and white—from the pioneering works of Dr. DuBois, to the wealth of factual literature by writers like Herbert Aptheker, Gunnar Myrdal, Ben Davis, James Allen, Malcolm X, Stokeley Carmichael, William Paterson . . . the list is endless; so are the novels and poems. Richard Wright, James Baldwin, Howard Fast, Langston Hughes, the beloved people's poet who died last year: these are but a few of the scores of talented writers who spring immediately to mind.

Millions all over the world have heard the songs of Negro suffering and aspirations, the haunting spirituals and militant protest songs known in every land through such great artists as the golden-voiced Paul Robeson, that mighty and heroic figure, whose seventieth birthday was commemorated in many lands on April 8th this year.

Jimcrow, lynchings, chain-gangs, Negro ghettoes, Scottsboro, Birmingham Alabama, Memphis, all these and a hundred other evocative words from America have become part of the international vocabulary.

'Of course', we are often told by American apologists in Africa, 'some things are wrong; but they are getting better. In the South, many now have the vote; there's a new law forbidding discrimination in housing; there are more Negroes getting skilled and administrative

jobs. And, after all, the black man in America is better off than he is anywhere in Africa—better fed, better housed, better clothed, better educated.'

These arguments make us mad.

If some Negroes now have the vote—won in bitter and sometimes bloody struggles 200 years after the Declaration of Independence!—it is no thanks to the boss class. And even now, though recently a few Negro mayors and councillors have been elected, we are well aware that their representation is ridiculously small in relation to their numbers. Negroes form a majority in some states, and ten per cent of the total U.S. population. And the only Congressman, Adam Clayton Powell, was recently unseated.

The glib talk about 'improvement' in economic conditions and civil rights ignores the fact that such improvement, if any, takes place at a snail's pace, against a background of desperate urgency punctuated by ever-increasing and ever more violent outbreaks of desperate protest.

In many respects the situation is getting worse.

It is notorious that Negroes in the United States find a practical colour bar operating against them in the field of training for and working in skilled jobs. The white employers, and in some cases the white-dominated trade unions under right-wing leadership, are to blame. Increasing automation in U.S. industry means less and less jobs—hence more and more unemployment. And since the black man is invariably 'the last to be hired and first the to be fired', he is the main sufferer.

A recent Labour Department survey covering twenty black ghettoes is quoted by Claude Lightfoot (op. cit.). It found the following:

	ghetto	*national*
Workers on short time	16.9%	2.3%
Workers earning less than 'annual poverty line' wages	21%	15.4%
Average family annual income ..	$3,000	$6,000

One of the most glaring examples of gross discrimination against Afro-Americans is provided by the present war in Vietnam. As is well known, practically every Negro leader of stature in the U.S.A. has spoken out against this abominable war, and this reflects the strongly anti-war feelings of the masses of their people. We have referred above to the firm stand taken by the late Dr. King. A completely different trend of thought is represented by the world champion boxer, Muhammed Ali, who belongs to the Moslem Movement which totally rejects integration and proposes a separatist solution. Yet on the question of

the war, Ali spoke the same language. He courageously stood up against the war, against himself being conscripted into the army. He was jailed and stripped of the boxing title he had won in the ring for saying:

> *No, I am not going 10,000 miles to help murder and kill and burn other people simply to help continue the domination of white slave-masters over the dark people the world over. This is the day and age when such evil injustice must come to an end.*

When it comes to the fighting, however, the Negro is the first to be conscripted and the first to die. As mentioned above, Negroes form about 10 per cent of the U.S. population. Official figures released by the Defence Department showed that, in the first eleven months of 1966 no less than 22.4 per cent of deaths in combat were of Negroes.

It is argued by some that this high proportion of battle deaths is not due to discrimination in the army but because of the 'special position' the Negro occupies in American society. Thus Louis Heren cabled from Washington to the London *Times* (15.2.67) that 'Negroes do not suffer because of the colour of their skins but because they are more often poor. Fewer of them go to university where they can apply for deferment of military service. Once inside the armed services they are more likely to be riflemen because they do not have the skills for technical, clerical and other non-combatant jobs'. So, according to this apologist, the Negro gets killed more not because he is black but because he is poor, unable to go to university, lacking in skill. But why, Mr. Heren, is he poor, unable to go to university or acquire skill? Because he is black.

It is precisely, indeed, this very 'special position' that Black America is complaining about and protesting against.

What, in fact, is this 'special position'? What is its essence?

Perhaps it is brought out most clearly by the argument that the black man is 'better off' in the States than he is in Africa. It is an argument which is used *ad nauseam* by the white supremacists who lord it over South Africa. 'What are you complaining about?' they say to their critics. 'The "Natives" earn much more in this country than they do in the independent African states.' In some instances, this may be true, though the propagandists of Pretoria greatly exaggerate it, ignoring the starvation of Africans in most rural areas of the Republic of S.A. Certainly the ravages of colonialism have left a heritage of terrible poverty in most African states. But the comparison is not between an African miner on the Witwatersrand earning R16 a month as against an African peasant in Central Africa whose cash income may be only R2 a month. It is between the same African miner with

his R16 a month as against the white miner by his side who takes home R261 a month!

Of course, this is far more than a question of economics. The African in South Africa is in a different position from his brothers up North because unlike them he is forced to live in a bachelor barracks, fenced urban location, or rural slum, constantly harried by the fierce white police; because he has no say in making or administering the laws; because he is treated like a foreigner and an outcast in his own motherland . . . in a word, because he is a member of a grossly *oppressed nation.*

In its penetrating Marxist analysis of this situation *The Road to South African Freedom*, the S.A. Communist Party concluded that it constituted a '*colonialism of a special type*'. It pointed out that, unlike the usual case where the imperialist power is situated far away from its colony, here we found the oppressing, imperialist nation situated side-by-side, within the same national borders, with an oppressed nation whom it subjected and exploited in a colonial-type manner analagous in its essentials to those of any African or Asian territory under foreign rule. The Programme proceeded to draw far-reaching practical conclusions from this analysis, whose validity is being borne out by history.

Now, of course, it is possible to pursue any analogy too far, and there are many differences as well as similarities, not least of which is that the U.S. Negroes constitute a minority group.

Nevertheless, there are similarities, and there is some analogy. Both countries, due to the unremitting toil of the black as well as of white workers, are industrially developed and rich societies, in which Africans are denied their share of the wealth, denied citizenship, democracy and all human rights.

The road hammered out by Africans in our country, has been the building of a great, militant and progressive national liberation movement—the African National Congress—consisting predominantly of workers and peasants, but uniting all sections and classes—which works *in alliance* with organisations of Coloured, Indian and democratic whites, and the militant labour movement, including the Communist Party, for the revolutionary overthrow of white supremacy and the achievement of a common programme—the Freedom Charter.

We do not, and writing from afar we cannot, pretend to know the answers to the complex problems of the American scene. Nevertheless, our experience does tend to show us that, in many respects, the Negro people of the United States, in the storm of struggle and internal debate, are moving in the direction of the building of a united, militant movement of national liberation.

4. THE NATIONAL FACTOR

In considering the dynamic and progressive character of black nationalism in the United States today, we must never forget the great central historical factors: slavery, forced transportation from the motherland, systematic degradation by the 'master race'.

In his famous essay on the national question, which for many Marxists, especially of the older generation, has been a text on this problem, Stalin began with a definition of 'a nation'. This approach was justified enough for its purpose—a polemic against the Austrian 'Marxist' concept of 'national cultural autonomy' as a substitute for independence. But, scholastically-treated, its effect has been unfortunate, because it tended to concentrate on the question of whether a given community 'constituted a nation'. If not, presumably they were not entitled to national rights.

This approach of beginning with a definition is quite inappropriate for consideration of the problems of communities undergoing the *historical process* of development into nations. And even more so for discussing the special problem of a community made up of people artificially and forcibly torn from their motherland, their languages and traditional cultures ruthlessly suppressed, and subjected for centuries to an alien culture. 'Subjected' here is the right word, for the black man could never absorb or be absorbed into a culture *one of whose principal underlying tenets is the degrading and nonsensical assumption of the inherent superiority of the 'white' European peoples, and the hereditary biological inferiority of non-Europeans.*

This grotesque 'theory' had its origins in the conquest, colonisation and despoliation of other areas, principally Africa and Asia, by the West Europeans and their consequent psychological need to 'justify' their savage behaviour, including the wholesale traffic in and inhuman exploitation of African slaves.

Chattel slavery has formally been abolished; old-style colonialism has all but vanished, except for such shameful remnants as still exist in 'Portuguese' Africa and the white supremacy regimes of Smith and Vorster. But concepts change much more slowly than the historical circumstances which created them. Colour prejudice (i.e. arrogant white chauvinism) still remains very much a part of the American (and for that matter of the English) way of life. It is covered over with pious liberal phrases by the leaders of the major political parties, apart that is, from the uncouth utterances of the Goldwaters, Wallaces, Sandyses and Powells. But it remains very much alive in the conduct, actions and speech of the masses.

Into such a 'culture' the African-descended people of the United

States do not want to be 'integrated'. They cannot be so without sacrificing their own dignity, pride and self-respect.

It follows that they will seek and are seeking to create a national culture and consciousness of their own, building on the common historical experience of the hard and continuing struggle up from slavery, from all that is best and untainted in the American and human heritage—and looking ever for fresh inspiration to the land of their ancestors, Mother Africa.

5. W. E. B. DUBOIS AND THE AFRICAN HERITAGE

It is fully understandable that living in a society in which he was brutally exploited, and from which he was alienated and excluded, the thoughts of the Negro in America should return ever and again to Africa.

At one time many were inspired by the vision of Marcus Garvey, who dreamed of a mass 'Back to Africa' movement of migration. It was and remains an impractical, utopian and wrong concept. People of African descent have as much right in North, Central and South America and the Caribbean Islands as have those of European descent. And we have yet to learn of any proposal that all except the aboriginal 'Indians' should quit!

But what is altogether practical, proper and indeed essential is that our brothers and sisters far over the seas should regain, study and treasure the cultural heritage of Africa, that we should strengthen and multiply our ties with one another; that we should understand our common interests and destiny. For the freedom of the black man in Africa is necessary for the black man in America; nor can any African patriot on our continent be satisfied while millions of our people abroad are persecuted, humiliated and victimised because of their African origin.

Towards illuminating this concept and bringing it into the realm of practice no-one contributed more than the late Dr. W. E. B. DuBois, who died five years ago in Ghana and the centenary of whose birth we are commemorating this year. Dr. DuBois has rightly been called the father of African unity. His name is venerated throughout our continent. Indeed it is sometimes difficult for us to remember that he was first of all an American, that he spent the greater part of his life in the struggle for Negro rights in the land of his birth, that he remained until the end a member of the Communist Party of the U.S.A.

Dr. DuBois raised the concept of the unity of the peoples of our continent at a time when hardly anyone outside the African National Congress of South Africa was thinking of the name 'Africa' as any-

thing but an abstract geographical concept. At a time when nearly all our countries were still under the rule of various European governments, he already looked forward to the period when they would achieve both independence and oneness of purpose.

It may well be said that the establishment of the Organisation of African Unity at Addis Ababa in 1963 owes more to the inspiration of Dr. BuBois than that of any other single individual.

In the same tradition was the attendance at the Kinshasa Heads of State Conference some months ago by a delegation from the Student Non-violent Co-ordinating Committee, which was warmly welcomed by the African leaders. Following this visit, R. Rap Brown, Chairman of 'Snick' issued a widely-distributed circular to black communities throughout the United States. 'Our brothers and sisters in South Africa,' he wrote 'have launched a revolutionary armed struggle against the fascist, illegal white governments of Rhodesia and South Africa. . . . We shall win.' He continued:

> *You must help! The hour has come when we must support our blood brothers. Educate yourself about the nature of the involvement of the United States and other Western powers in helping to maintain racism, colonialism and apartheid in South Africa. . . . Brothers, we cannot wait for the struggle will be long and bitter and we must begin to help now.*
> *Collect and send money immediately to Oliver Tambo, President, African National Congress, PO Box 2239 Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.*
> *Collect and send medical supplies to President Tambo.*

That is the practical, meaningful kind of brotherhood in struggle, which will do more than a thousand declarations to forge stronger bonds between our people at home and in America!

But this needs to be a two-way traffic.

At the historic Addis Ababa Summit Conference of May 1963, the African Heads of State expressed the

> *deep concern aroused in all African peoples and governments by the measures of racial discrimination against communities of African origin living outside the continent and particularly in the United States of America.*

The resolution pointed out that these '*intolerable malpractices*' were likely to lead to a deterioration of relations between African governments and peoples and the U.S.A.

Unfortunately, very little has been done in practice in the intervening years to carry forward the spirit of this resolution. This is not because the African people have ceased to feel deep concern about the treat-

ment of our kith and kin in America—indeed they are concerned and outraged. The truth is that many of our African governments—or sometimes members of those governments—have placed themselves in pawn to the dollar imperialists.

Well then, we must not leave it to the governments. We must act and speak up in support of people of African origin, wherever they may be, and especially in the U.S.A. Our leaders must be pressed to take this issue up at the United Nations—just as one of the first acts of Independent India was to raise the maltreatment of South Africans of Indian origin at that forum—and in every other forum.

We must study with keen interest the struggles of our brothers and sisters in the U.S.A. for human rights and African dignity. This is our very own struggle!

We must show in every possible, practical way our concern, our sympathy and our support, so that every oppressed person in America will feel he has behind him the love and the protection of 300 millions in Africa.

THE CASE FOR THE PERSECUTION

Police 'Literature' from South Africa

J. J. JABULANI

People, I have loved you. Be on your guard.

JULIUS FUCIK: *Report from the Gallows.*

But these are called Informers; men that live
By treason, as rat-catchers do by poison.

BEAUMONT.

He had paled before the rod of the Gestapo and ratted to save his own skin . . . He had lost everything because he had begun to think of himself. To save his own skin he had sacrificed his comrades. He had given way to cowardice, and out of cowardice had turned traitor. . . . He had deserted a glorious army and earned the contempt of the foulest of enemies. . . .

FUCIK.

As FUCIK was led off to execution, he started singing. SS men bound his mouth, but the prisoners in the third block at Plotzensee heard him and carried on his song.

Even as the Czech patriot and communist fell at the Nazi scaffold on September 8th, 1943, in Berlin, Fucik's song was taken up by the peoples of the world. Vuyisile Mini took it up on his way to the Nazi scaffold in South Africa. The patriots who have spilled their blood on the Zimbabwe battlefields were asserting, again, their confidence in the future which belongs to the struggling peoples of our own country and the world.

The various 'show trials' that have been held in South Africa, including such notable events as the marathon Treason Trial of 1956-1961, the 'Rivonia' trial and the Fischer trial were designed

by the regime not only to punish and silence the leaders of the revolutionary resistance, but also to discredit them.

In this, they failed totally. The sneers of Pirow, Liebenberg, Yutar and others, attempting to belittle our leaders and depict them as criminals, have soon been forgotten. But the world and South Africa can never forget that Nelson Mandela stood up to face a possible death sentence and said: 'I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. . . . If needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die.' They cannot forget that Bram Fischer stood up, in like circumstances, and told the judge: 'What I did was right. . . . It was to keep faith with all those dispossessed by apartheid. . . . I knew what they expected of me and I did it. I felt responsible not to those who are indifferent to the sufferings of others, but to those who are concerned.'

The world has heard the voices of our freedom-fighters. The Court speeches of Mandela, Fischer and others, resounding manifestoes of truth and courage, have been translated into scores of languages, inserted into the records of the United Nations, reproduced all over the world. These winged words have flown afar; they inspire others who strive for freedom; their echoes are heard in other, far-away courtrooms and ring out on the battlefields of the fight against imperialism and oppression everywhere.

In contrast, the 'case' for the fascist regime, the police state of Vorster, is rightly regarded with contempt and hatred throughout the world. Apart from the Ku-Klux-Klan and its counterparts in the imperialist countries, it has few supporters, and even fewer open defenders, anywhere, despite millions spent by the well-endowed 'Information' service and the millionaire establishment organised in the South African Foundation. At home, too, a fortune is spent on 'Radio Bantu' and other propaganda to little effect. The non-white peoples, the victims of apartheid, can never be taught to admire it; even whites, though mostly still voting for the Nationalist or United Parties, harbour profound doubts and fears.

It is against this background that we turn to examine four volumes published in South Africa putting the official or police case in relation to the Rivonia and Fischer trials.

Rivonia—Operation Mayibuye is written by H. H. W. de Villiers, a former judge, and purports to be a review of the Rivonia trial.

Rivonia Unmasked, by Lauritz Strydom, has a similar purpose and carries a foreword by Vorster and an introduction by Prosecutor Percy Yutar.

Umkonto we Sizwe, The Road to the Left is by Bruno Mtolo, who—

melodramatically described as 'Mr. X' was the main prosecution witness in the Rivonia trial.

The Amazing Mr. Fischer is by Blaar Grobbelaar and Gerard Ludi, the latter also a prosecution witness and self-confessed police agent and provocateur.

PROPAGANDIST INTENT

All four books have an obvious purpose—to cash in on the tremendous public interest aroused by these sensational court cases. But each has another purpose as well—propaganda. Each seeks to counteract the tremendous impression made among the masses by the heroic actions and flaming words of the accused leaders; to defend the indefensible policies of the Nationalist Party government; to advance, in opposition to the democratic beliefs of the liberation movement, a 'philosophy' of South African fascism.

It is characteristic, however, that even in dealing with the actual events they purport to describe, these examples of 'police literature' twist and misrepresent the facts.

Let us examine the work of the most reputable of the authors, H. H. W. de Villiers, former Judge-President of the Eastern Cape and, when he wrote his book, chairman of the Press Board of Reference. He might be thought, with his legal background, capable of a fair summary of the trial.

The Johannesburg *Sunday Times*, however, listed eight major discrepancies between de Villiers' book and the Court Record.

For example, de Villiers writes that Bernstein was shown by the evidence to be a member of the High Command—the Court Record showed that Bernstein was acquitted because there was no evidence at all to show that he was a member of the High Command.

De Villiers says Hepple fled South Africa 'because his life was threatened by fellow-conspirators. But *The Sunday Times* quotes Hepple's own statement when he arrived at Dar es Salaam: 'I might have been re-arrested and placed under 90-day detention. I left because of broken promises made to me by the police.'

'Another witness, Cyril Davids,' writes de Villiers, 'testified to the association of the Communist Party with the conspiracy and also the African Youth League of which the African National Congress was the parent body.' But according to the Court Record, there was no such evidence. In eighty pages of evidence, Davids never once mentioned the word 'Communist'. He said under cross-examination, 'I didn't know anything about the Youth League'.

The 'Honourable' de Villiers reproduces photographs of the Johannesburg station and of women and children injured in the 1964 Johan-

nesburg station bomb explosion. The implication is clearly that the 'Rivonia' accused were responsible. But as *The Sunday Times* pointed out, not only were Umkhonto and the Rivonia trialists not responsible for this action, but also the judge found that the accused were truthful in their statements that danger to life was to be avoided where possible.

If this is the veracity of a senior judge of a country whose standards of justice, Vorster once boasted were equalled by few other countries, one can imagine the unrestrained lying to be expected from stool-pigeons, spies and professional apologists for apartheid.

POLICE 'PHILOSOPHY'

The Special Branch of the South African Police is 'special' in more ways than one. In the long series of political trials that began (under the Smuts government) with the prosecution of the Central Executive of the Communist Party and others following the African Miners' Strike of 1946, the 'S.B.' revealed itself as anxious to do more than secure the conviction in the courts of the freedom fighters, and to malign their motives and their character. It has sought, and largely succeeded, in taking the matter of 'dealing with' the liberation movement out of the Courtrooms and into its own police cells and torture chambers. More, it has entered into the field of politics, of ideas, and zealously striven to impose its own twisted outlook on the population.

Like all oppressors they are conscious that in the battle of ideas, the use of force to suppress opposition is not enough. They have learnt well the lesson preached by the 'Master', Adolf Hitler:

> If force be used to combat a spiritual power, that force remains a defensive measure only, so long as the wielders of it are not the standard bearers and apostles of a new spiritual doctrine . . . it is only in the struggle between *Weltanschauungen* (philosophies of life) that physical force, consistently and ruthlessly applied, will eventually turn the scales in its own favour.

Now what is common to the four volumes before us is that each, in varying degrees, have been written under the influence of the Special Branch. Ex-judge de Villiers and journalist Strydom are openly worshipful of these 'heroes' of repression, who provided their main source of information. Ludi openly proclaimed himself a professional S.B. agent; Mtolo's book consists largely of a rehash of statements made to the police and court evidence; it was no doubt carefully vetted by them. They may be described in a sense as 'police literature'.

In these four books, then, fascism is searching for a 'philosophy of life' to counterpose to the democratic upsurge among the mass of the people as clearly represented in the slogan: *Amandla ngawethu*—Power to the People!

Its main content is, of course, obsessive anti-Communism.

Verwoerd was to elucidate this philosophy four days after sentences were passed on Mandela and his colleagues, when he complained of the sympathy for them in the West. He continued:

> When it is said in those circles that they are glad that Mandela received a life sentence and not a death sentence, because he may still, like Kenyatta, become the leader of the future, then I say, 'God forbid!' If that were to happen, not only would South Africa be doomed and become Communist, but then the world would in time be conquered by Communism, because after that the only bastions which still protect white civilisation against that pernicious ideology would fall one after another.

In their propaganda literature, de Villiers and the rest are concerned with elucidating this 'philosophy'—Western civilisation threatened by the 'pernicious ideology', Communism. Again, the lesson comes from Hitler's *Mein Kampf*:

> The art of leadership consists of consolidating the attention of the people against a single adversary and taking care that nothing will split up this attention. . . . The leader of genius must have the ability to make different opponents appear as if they belonged to one category.

In South Africa, the fighters against white minority domination, must be made to appear as if they belong to one category, communists. The fascists seek to produce 'witnesses' to swear that everybody belongs to this one category. In these conditions the traitor, the turncoat, the informer comes out of the shadows. He parades in the law courts, denouncing his erstwhile colleagues, preaching about the dangers of communism. To ensure him some return for his services to the oppressor against his own people, the enemy presses print a book for him—his royalties are the pay-off.

Before he was arrested Bruno Mtolo, as a Congress man and trade unionist, has not the slightest difficulty in accepting the presence as colleagues and comrades, of Communists. In fact he joined the Communist Party. But under the 'educational methods' of the Special Branch, while under arrest before the Rivonia trial, he suddenly discovered that 'the Communists' were the cause of all the difficulties. He told the Court, as a state witness, that there was 'friction' between the A.N.C. and Umkhonto we Sizwe, but this could be smoothed out (Strydom, p. 93).

> Yutar (Prosecutor): How?
> Mtolo: By giving the Communists a majority in the African National Congress.
> Yutar: So that the A.N.C. would in effect become Communist-controlled?
> Mtolo: Yes. (And later) I still believe in the A.N.C., but not in an A.N.C. which is controlled by the Communists. The A.N.C. has been betrayed by its leaders.

This attempt to 'rewrite' the history of the struggle in South Africa is also apparent in the version of Ludi, who stretches the credulity of

the most gullible reader. For instance he purports to report the National Conference of the South African Communist Party (at which he was not present) held, he says, illegally in Johannesburg in November 1962. He writes:

> Joe Slovo informed the gathering that plans were being made to step up the sabotage campaign. Umkhonto was devising a master plan which would be submitted to the Central Committee of the Communist Party for approval. (He) admitted that Umkhonto . . . had not been formed spontaneously by a group of bitter, frustrated Africans who were fighting for the rights of their people, the oppressed majority, but had been formed and was being financed and run by white Communists acting as agents for Moscow and Peking. (Ludi and Grobbelaar, pp. 38-9.)

Who could believe that a speaker addressing a Communist Conference could possibly use anything remotely resembling the words put into Slovo's mouth by Ludi? But the object is clear enough.

The attention of the people at home and abroad is being consolidated against a single adversary—communism. That is the task of all the producers of this propaganda literature.

This smear process was embarked upon very early on in the history of the rise of fascism in South Africa. In the law courts it became familiar in the Treason Trial of 1956-61. Percy Yutar was continuing the tradition of the 'political prosecutor' when he tried to do a hatchet job on the Liberal Party leader, Alan Paton, who appeared as a witness, in mitigation, as asked by defence counsel at the Rivonia trial. Yutar said:

> . . . I do not as a rule cross-examine people who are called in mitigation of sentence, but I propose to cross-examine this witness . . . in order to unmask this gentleman. . . .

As prosecutor and judge, Yutar was to write in his introduction to Strydom's book:

> He (Paton) professed to be a prophet. I doubted it, because he had close contact with vicious, communistic and anti-South African literature, as well as with a number of well-known communists and traitors of South Africa.

The technique is very simple. 'Unmask' all the anti-fascists as 'vicious, communistic, anti-South African' people. Cultivate an unreasoning, hysterical fear and hatred of the 'communists'.

No attempt is made to discuss the principles of Marxism-Leninism, the philosophy of communists the world over. Rather the intention is to teach the people that Marxism-Leninism is alien to South Africa. Since South Africa is one of the 'bastions of white, Western civilisation', then it follows that communism is alien to that 'civilisation'. A South African communist, real or imaginary, must therefore be

serving an alien power. He is therefore a traitor to his country and his people. Mtolo testifies:

> Here in South Africa, we launched a sabotage campaign in order to overthrow the government and replace its policy, not with our own policy but with an imported policy, namely Communism—something that we had never heard of in the whole of Africa. (Mtolo, p. 178.)

Grobbelaar has discovered that 'the Communists seem to have singled out South Africa as one of their prime targets' (p. 139). Not only does this 'journalist' know that, but he also knows why South Africa has been so selected. The first reason is that 'the Communists' would like to lay their hands on the South African uranium deposits and thus give themselves open opportunity for building up their stock-piles of nuclear weapons. Secondly, they want the South African gold so that they can wreck the economies of the bourgeois countries. Thirdly, they want South Africa because its developed economic base would serve as a good launching pad from which to dominate the rest of Africa. Of course, South Africa is also a 'relatively important control point of East-West shipping'. The facts that all 'the Communists' concerned are South Africans, that their published programme sets forth precisely their aims—these are not even mentioned.

In this manner the enemy propagandist hopes to consolidate all the white population in South Africa, inclusive of all the wavering sections, so that they all stand solidly behind the government. Moreover, the spectre of communism must be brandished before the 'West' to ensure that it will collaborate with South African fascism.

TWO VOICES

It is typical of South Africa's brand of neo-Nazism (and one of its fatal weaknesses) that it speaks in two separate (or segregated) voices: one for 'white' the other for 'non-white' consumption.

Here is the version meant 'for Europeans only':

> As far as the Bantu is concerned, not only in the Republic . . . South Africa is a welfare state. Our problem is to keep the foreign Bantu out, not to keep our own Bantu in . . . 'the rank and file of the Bantu people (do not) care a fig for the vote in a white man's Parliament. . . . The Bantu is still at the stage where the Roman people were at the time of the fall of the Roman Empire when the populace shouted 'Give us bread and the Circus. . . .' (de Villiers, p. 47.)
> If the rule and control of the country . . . (is) assumed by the Bantu . . . the world may witness as great chaos in South Africa as in the Congo, and a rapid decline of the prosperity, economy and production potential of the Republic of South Africa. (de Villiers, p. 105.)

Of course, this sort of crude racialist propaganda will not do for the African majority of our people. Here it is better to enrol the

services of an African collaborator—who better to perform the role than the infamous 'Mr. X' himself? It is as though Judas were not only to receive his thirty pieces of silver, but also to be employed to advertise the justice and wisdom of Pilate.

It is not a pleasant spectacle.

> I shall try to speak to my black brothers . . . as a man whose eyes have been opened. May my voice be strong, and may all the ears of all who love Africa be open to the truth! (Mtolo, p. 177.)

Here is the man whose evidence jailed countless patriots declaring 'love' for Africa. He would like to wriggle his way back into the ranks of the glorious army of the oppressed people that he abandoned. He wants to present himself into a hero. He has to declare that he is 'not a government supporter, and probably will always be on the opposing side'. He must show himself as a greater patriot than Mandela. Therefore, he must say that he loves the African National Congress, but hates the communists in it, that is, its leaders. He is therefore the truer lover of his people, the African majority.

Thus, as a man 'whose eyes have been opened', he must inform his 'black brothers' that the adoption of the Freedom Charter was 'communist-engineered', against the wishes of the true African in the A.N.C. Similarly, the formation of Umkhonto we Sizwe was communist-inspired while the 'local A.N.C. leaders and the rank and file were shaky about it. Because the A.N.C. top leadership was by then fully in the hands of the Communists, these leaders could not openly reject it. . . . The majority of people were unaware of this' (Mtolo, p. 183).

Mtolo's love for the oppressor demands more of him—he must defend the oppressor against the oppressed. Thus to him 'separate development' (apartheid) becomes entirely good. For the majority it means 'black municipal drivers', government-built schools and universities; it means the 'Bantu Development Corporation where an African can borrow money, either to build his home or to open up a business in the reserves'. It means that Umtata in the Transkei and Eshowe in Zululand will 'eventually come under native government'. . . . Mtolo once took it as a 'far-fetched dream. Today that dream is coming true' (p. 189).

APPEAL TO LUTHULI

Mtolo even pleads with the late President of the A.N.C. to follow him into betrayal!

In his closing chapter he addresses the President directly, 'Listen Chief Luthuli, it is time for the Zulu people to make peace with the white man'. To adorn with philosophy force ruthlessly applied, he

says: 'By restricting you to your home the government has prevented bloodshed'. The degenerate chapter closes:

> It is very important that the Africans of South Africa, especially the Zulus, should try and co-operate with the Government. . . . I cannot see any man among the Zulus who is capable of leading the Zulu nation on this path except you, Chief (Luthuli), who are accepted by the people. (Mtolo, p. 193.)

The collaborator must divide and then set brother against brother in order that his masters may succeed. He sets the Zulu against the Sotho and both against the Indian. He must put the communist against the rest, charging Mandela with an unpatriotic communism and thus justifying his life-long incarceration.

The leader is set against the people. It is not merely that these leaders are communists while the people are not. Fundamentally the people have no reason to struggle for their liberation. Perhaps Mtolo (or is it the Special Branch talking?) thinks that if you tell the people so many times that they are not oppressed, they themselves will begin to doubt if they are. Should these doubts not be strong enough to stop them rising up again, they are warned that force will be applied 'consistently and ruthlessly' to those that dare raise their heads. It is useless to resist.

Mtolo tells the people that 'weapons that were taken up by our great-grandfathers we can never touch. They are so dangerous'. . . . He calls for collaboration with the oppressor 'because we may get by peaceful methods the freedom we have been striving for in fighting against the Government' (p. 193).

CHARACTER ASSASSINATION

A particularly mean streak running through all this apartheid propaganda is the unfailing attempt at character-assassination of the leaders of our people who (even if you do not agree with them) should be conceded, at least, to be men of principle, who had the courage of their convictions, and are paying a heavy penalty. But no glimmer of generosity or magnanimity appears is this miserable collection of fascist propaganda.

Aware of the hatred of the majority of the people for the oppressor and their dedication to the vanguard workers, peasants and the intellectuals who sprang from among them, the oppressor propagandist must malign this vanguard. They follow the pattern set by prosecutor Yutar and the judge de Wet in the Rivonia trial who accused the men in the dock of seeking a revolution to get Cabinet posts!

> What are they, these agitators and self-styled champions of the 'oppressed people'? . . . Unscrupulous opportunists, publicity-hunters, nonentities

reaching eagerly for this heaven-sent skeleton key to notoriety and the headlines. . . .' (Strydom, p. 66.)

For obeying the instructions of his organisation to go underground, Bram Fischer is accused by the police spy of being a coward and double-dealer. He had urged 'his fellow Communists not to be scared of jail . . .' (Ludi and Grobbelaar, p. 72).

Mtolo, the African collaborator, is not to be outdone in his spite against the men his evidence has helped to send for life to Robben Island.

Mtolo: They (the leaders) didn't care about me nor about the others, the recruits who were arrested. . . . When they, the leaders, wanted to leave South Africa they took good care not to get themselves arrested. But they didn't care about the safety of the recruits.
Yutar: They made you give up your permanent job and they made so many promises which were not kept. Were the so-called leaders of the High Command any better off? Did they have money?
Mtolo: Mlangeni had a motor-car. Walter Sisulu was able to pay £3,000 bail. . . . And after he had paid the six thousand, he still had his car. . . . Nobody cared if my children went hungry.
(Rivonia Trial, Court Record)

(They were the leaders who) . . . made us and our families starve while they were living in luxury.
They were driving around in posh cars, collecting money from all corners of the world with the pretence that it was for the liberation of the African people. . . . Through them some poor kids will never see their fathers and brothers again. . . . (Mtolo, p. 142.)

He continues:

The people who had formed Umkhonto and who were involved, had all run away. Only the small group which was rounded up at Rivonia, was left. It cannot be said that this group stayed because they were prepared to carry on the fight for their ideals. In my opinion they stayed only for the money which was pouring into the country. . . . There is not the slightest indication that they were interested in the wellbeing of the African people as such. (Mtolo, p. 154.)

Despite all he has done, Mtolo does not admit he is a traitor. Where his loyalty lies is shown in a revealing passage. He asks, who is traitor? The answer, amazingly, those 'who were prepared to give evidence for the state and made signed statements . . . but when they are trusted by the police and released . . . decided to run. . . . Were they heroes?' (Mtolo, p. 156).

The world is turned upside-down. Death is life, tyranny is freedom, the oppressor a liberator—Mtolo is no traitor.

Bram Fischer knew well enough that such vicious slanders would be made against him, when he told the court.

'I knew I would be condemned by people who are content to see

themselves as respectable and loyal citizens. I cannot regret any condemnation that may follow me.'

Indeed it is no condemnation to be attacked and maligned by the bloodstained oppressors of our people, the champions of the gorillas of the Special Branch.

THEY LOVE THE HANGMEN

For there is one other thing that distinguishes all these authors of this collection of political pornography. And that is their boundless love and admiration for Vorster's elite 'SS', the Special Branch of the SA Police, infamous the world over as torturers and murderers, the hangmen of our people's liberty.

In a state in which the laws are directed against the majority of the people, its instruments of oppression attain an almost mystical veneration in the eyes of the oppressor. Such is the adulation of the police in this literature.

Strydom writes:

> If the leaders of the underground movement were subtle and cunning, the Police Force . . . was no less so. The cream of this force is the Security Force, a hand-picked body of men, keen-sighted and sharp of hearing, whose eyes and ears are everywhere. (pp. 11-12.)

Ludi and Grobbelaar:

> In the early 'sixties the police gained one success after another. . . . The South African Government was fully aware of the dangers facing the country and thus armed the police with emergency powers. (i.e. arrest without trial and torture—J.J.) The results were dramatic.

Mtolo also adds a congratulatory word. These that killed Mini and Saloojee, that killed the people at Sharpeville and have tortured thousands, were 'all good to me'. He writes: 'When I came in contact with these people (Afrikaner police) . . . and saw their attitude towards the person who was supposed to be their enemy, I started to think' (p. 139).

This necessarily brief survey has, it is hoped, helped to reveal the utter poverty, dishonesty and vulgarity of this gutter-literature. It reflects the diseased society which it defends, and which gave rise to it, founded in greed and crude chauvinism; dehumanised and brutal. This propaganda literature is merely the ravings of the enemy. Speaking in 1934 from the very heart of enemy territory in a Nazi court in Leipzig, the communist Georgi Dimitrov said:

> . . . the working class, the peasants and the culture of Bulgaria are neither savage nor barbarous. . . . Only fascism in Bulgaria is savage and barbarous. But I ask you, in what country does not fascism bear these qualities? (Dimitrov's Final Speech at the 'Reichstag Fire Trial.)

Fascism is savage and barbarous in our own country as well. This, its literature, is meant to defend but merely serves to expose it. It will not save it from ignominy in the world and destruction by the revolutionary peoples of South Africa.

Should it not be ignored, as merely the ravings of a doomed enemy? I think not. Lenin once wrote:

> Let the bourgeoisie rave, work itself into a frenzy, overdo things, commit stupidities, take vengeance on the Bolsheviks in advance and endeavour to kill off (in India, Hungary, Germany, etc.) hundreds and thousands and . . . more of yesterday's and tomorrow's Bolsheviks. Acting thus, the bourgeoisie act as all classes doomed by history have acted. Communists should know that the future, at any rate, belongs to them; therefore, we can, and must, combine the most intense passion in the great revolutionary struggle with the coolest and most sober evaluation of the mad ravings of the bourgeoisie. (*'Left-wing' Communism: an Infantile Disorder.*)

As Julius Fucik has warned us: we must be on our guard.

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LATIN AMERICA AND THE IDEAS OF REGIS DEBRAY

JOE SLOVO

THE PASSION WHICH Regis Debray feels for the cause of the Latin American revolution cannot be questioned. The savage sentence of thirty years imposed upon him by the Bolivian regime came at the end of a trial in which he distinguished himself by a bearing in the best revolutionary traditions. Although his presence amongst Che Guevara's guerillas was in the capacity of a journalist, and not a guerilla fighter, he made not the slightest effort to disengage himself from the sort of revolutionary devotion and ardour which in the end cost Che his life.

He told the Tribunal:

> As a Revolutionary (to the extent to which I can be called one) I feel and I declare myself jointly responsible for all the 'crimes' committed by all revolutionaries everywhere in the world. . . .
> Except for the mentally sick and the fascists, no one likes men to have to make history by killing. But if you want to talk about crimes, where are the innocent ones? . . .
> Each one has to decide which side he is on—on the side of military violence or guerilla violence, on the side of violence that represses or violence that liberates . . . you chose certain ones and I chose others.[1]

Nothing—no critique, no adverse assessment—should deflect any of us from the duty to press in every way possible for the liberty of Debray and the other freedom fighters who languish in the jails of Barrientos.

There is yet another reason it may be argued, why this is not the most propitious moment to sit back and reflect on Debray the theoretician. In part his presence in Bolivia appears to have been for the purpose of equipping himself more fully on the problem of the place

[1] Quoted in *Granma* January 28th, 1968.

of guerilla warfare in Latin American conditions. For the moment we are, regrettably, deprived of his further reflections and comments on the theoretical polemics which he has helped to spark off.

In the light of these factors ought we, even temporarily, to be deflected from subjecting the tendencies evident in Debray's approach to the strictest scrutiny? Certainly not. Neither Debray nor any other serious revolutionary would countenance such a patronising approach. And the reason is crystal clear. Outside of a university seminar or a magazine polemic (though many so-called 'Lefts' and 'Revolutionaries' do their most intensive struggling at this level) the influence of theories of struggle, their adoption or rejection, is often literally a matter of life and death for thousands of militants or indeed a whole movement.

Debray himself alludes to this when he points to the fact that the undigested lessons of the Cuban experience

> gave rise to half a hundred revolutionary organisations on the margin of the Communist Party resolved on direct action. Several years of revolutionary action have now made it clear that heroism is not enough, and that ideological maturity and above all, political sense, absence of sectarianism and seriousness in preparing armed struggle were lacking. . . . Prisoners of the Cuban model, these so-called Fidelista organisations perished.[2]

There is yet another reason why we must be hard taskmasters. Whether intended by Debray or not, his texts are projected in many quarters, not as a tentative commentary or as food for thought (which some of his propositions are), but as an authoritative formulation of the views of Cuba's leaders. In the words of the editors of *Monthly Review*[3]

> Regis Debray though writing only in his capacity as a private student of revolutionary theory and practice, has succeeded in presenting to the world an accurate and profound account of the thinking of the leaders of the Cuban Revolution on these subjects. . . . We have here for the first time a comprehensive and authoritative presentation of the revolutionary thought of Fidel Castro and Che Guevara.

One could argue that this claim is exaggerated. For example, on the most important question of the role of the political vanguard (to which I shall return), there seems on the face of it a divergence between the view of Debray and that contained in the report of the Cuban delegation to the August 1967 OLAS Conference and the remarks by Fidel Castro in his closing speech.

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[2] 'Problems of Revolutionary Strategy in Latin America'—*New Left Review*, No. 45, p. 23.

[3] *Monthly Review*, July-August 1967. Foreword by Leo Huberman and Paul Sweezy to *Revolution in the Revolution.*

Nevertheless, a general belief that Debray's thinking is so closely associated with that of the Cuban Revolution, lends prestige to his propositions.

The editors of *New Left Review* in their introductory notes to Debray's article 'Problems of Revolutionary Strategy in Latin America' go further. They describe some of his fundamental propositions as 'authentically Leninist' and generally project his thinking as embodying the true essence of Bolshevik strategy and its renovation for Latin American conditions.

In the light of these claims, which have undoubtedly influenced the thinking of many militants both within and outside Latin America, it becomes even more necessary to subject his thesis to a searching examination.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CUBA

In doing this we must not overlook the fact that Debray was tackling a Continent in the context of an event which marks an absolute watershed in the history of revolutionary struggles in Latin America—the Cuban Revolution. This historic event did more than liberate the Cuban people from the Batista dictatorship and set Cuba along the path of socialist construction. In a sense, it was Latin America's 'October'. It became the contemporary symbol for all in Latin America of the successful revolutionary struggle, the catalyst of a thoroughgoing reappraisal of many of the fundamental problems of the Latin American revolution—a process which is as yet incomplete.

Old cliches and the dogmatic invocation of 'eternal' rules of revolutionary struggle, stood in the way of the evolvement of a strategy which accorded with the reality of Latin American conditions. Francisco Mieres, a leading Venezuelan communist, writing in *World Marxist Review*[4] put it as follows:

> Unfortunately we received the legacy of October which became the basis of our revolutionary movement, rather tailored and distorted. . . . This was one of the reasons why our theoretical work was not distinguished for either richness or originality. It did not draw on the reality of our countries nor did it have the ability for genuine self-regeneration.
> The Cuban Revolution challenged everything, upset everything, stripped the sacred sham-truisms from the altar and subjected everything to criticism (not always correctly let it be said) and gave rise to doubts, confusion and over-simplification. But out of this chaos would come ultimately the Latin American theory of revolution.

Amongst the more significant discussions of revolutionary theory which the Cuban revolution helped to spark off, were the questions

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[4] *World Marxist Review*, No. 11, 1967.

of the revolutionary potentialities of the national bourgeoisie, the much vexed question of alliances, fronts and so on, the role of the vanguard, as well as the question of the maturing of a revolutionary situation. More particularly it raised the problem of the extent to which the subjective factor can either utilise or create the revolutionary situation.

For example, Che Guevara in his book *Guerilla Warfare* wrote 'The Cuban Revolution reveals that . . . one does not necessarily have to wait for a revolutionary situation to arise: it can be created'. This conclusion refutes 'those who feel the need to wait until, in some perfect way, all the required objective and subjective conditions are at hand, instead of hastening to bring these conditions about through their own efforts'.

An interesting commentary on this problem is contained in a paper by Dr. Grigory Glezerman—'Correlation of the Objective Conditions and the Subjective Factor in the light of the experience of the October Revolution' in which one of his main conclusions is stated as follows:

'It is impossible to agree with the opinion of some authors that in present-day conditions the maturing of a revolutionary situation increasingly depends on the maturity of the political army of the revolution, on the strategy and tactics of the Party and other elements of the subjective factor. . . . Determined action of the revolutionary forces, supported by the masses, can be merely the impetus which speeds the maturing of the revolutionary situation, but only if sufficient combustible material has accumulated in a country, if there are objective conditions creating a revolutionary situation. The idea that the boldness and determination of the revolutionary vanguard are sufficient to rouse the masses to revolution, is a dangerous illusion.'[5]

Drawing on the Cuban experience, Debray generalises more or less as follows (and more or less for the whole of Latin America):

(a) What he calls 'Fidelism' is, according to him, characterised in the first place by 'its refusal of the *coup d'état*.[6] He makes the point that whatever the forces that initially support it, a government brought to power by a putsch necessarily tends to the right. The fact that the army is, to a greater extent than previously, recruited from sections of the lower middle class, has led to the theory[7] that the army becomes a 'social microcosm

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[5] *Voprosi Filosofi*, No. 11, 1967.

[6] One might add that this has always been the traditional approach of Leninism.

[7] It is not altogether clear to which groups Debray alludes as endorsing this theory. To my knowledge not a single contemporary communist party in Latin America regards the *coup d'état* as a substitute for revolutionary struggle.

which reflects the contradictions of the national macrocosm'. But, 'it is an absolute rule that one cannot base a strategy or even a tactical episode of the struggle upon the decision of a regiment or a garrison'.[8]

(b) At the opposite end to those who advocate 'revolutionary putschism' (Blanquism as applied to the actions of a military rather than a civilian minority), are the advocates of 'pure mass action'. The 'cautious truism' that revolution requires the conscious entry of the masses into the struggle is, Debray claims, proferred by many communist leaderships without an indication from them of *how* to awaken the masses in regions whose repressive instruments make political activity virtually impossible except amongst 'the narrow stratum of urban intelligentsia'.[9]

(c) What then is to be done? Debray answers: 'Fidelism replies in terms which are similar to those of Lenin in 1902. . . . In Fidelist terms, this is the theory of the Foco',[10] of 'the insurrectionary centre'. In short the answer lies in the creation of insurrectionary centres and not waiting for all the conditions for revolution to be fulfilled. In Latin America the creation of an insurrectionary centre can create conditions for revolution. Also in Latin American conditions, urban insurrections can be crushed too easily, hence the terrain of armed struggle must basically be in the countryside.

These formulations contain a mixture of truths, half-truths and impermissible generalisations.

In so far as they are based on the assumption that the strategic road in Latin America lies in the direction of armed struggle, they say little that is new.[11]

PRESUMPTUOUS ATTITUDE

In contrast to Debray's more engaging qualities, one is unpleasantly affected by his arrogant attitude to most Latin American Communists, who have behind them a lifetime of struggle and sacrifice, an experience

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[8] 'Latin America: The Long March' (*New Left Review*, September-October 1965, p. 20).
[9] Ibid., p. 22.
[10] An armed minority which 'establishes itself at the most vulnerable zone of the national territory, and then slowly spreads like an oil patch, propagating itself in concentric ripples through the peasant masses to the smaller towns, and finally to the capital'. (Ibid., p. 27.)
[11] Francisco Mieres (*W.M.R.*, November 1967): 'As regards the general strategic road in Latin America, there exists practically complete unanimity. Armed struggle here is the rule and the peaceful way the exception'.

and knowledge of their countries which no outsider could hope to rival. He depicts the bulk of the Communist Party leaderships in the area as sitting back and waiting for the evolution of a revolutionary situation without any realist plan of how to awaken the masses. The broad sweep of his advice to revolutionaries in every part of this huge and varied Continent[12] is quite overpowering in its presumptuousness.

He dismisses with sarcastic contempt the slogan adopted by the Argentinian Communist Party at its Twelfth Congress—'Towards the Conquest of Power through the Action of the Masses!'[13] but has no positive alternative of his own. His general formula has no validity here, for Debray himself concedes that in Argentina, with its urban concentration of 75 per cent of the population, a rural insurrectionary centre 'can only have a subordinate role', that nothing can be achieved without the active participation of the urban workers, that a general strike, short of insurrection 'tends to be broken by violence'.[14] There are generalised cliches about armed struggle and preparation for such struggle. But if, as he emphasises repeatedly, urban insurrections have become a virtual impossibility; if 'pure mass action' is spurned, what future is there for the Argentinian masses? What is the answer to the crucial question of the strategy for the transfer of power in Argentina? Debray sheds little light on this. It would be surprising, if in fact, as a stranger to the situation, he was qualified or able to provide effective guidance on these questions.

Nor is this the only case where his sweeping generalisations, by his own admission, fail to meet the test of application to specific countries.

In Uruguay, Debray says, there are no conditions for armed struggle.

One does not know whether he agrees with the formulation of the Cuban delegation at the August 1967 OLAS Conference, when it stated that in the case of Chile it would be 'foolish and absurd' to speak of guerilla warfare.

He dismisses as 'irrational optimism' the thesis contained in the Chilean Communist Party programme approved at its twelfth Congress in March 1962, that 'the present correlation of national and international forces has increased the possibility of achieving revolu-

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[12] Most of South America is predominantly rural, but the rate of urbanisation is growing and in many countries is already significantly high. By 1960 Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Cuba and Venezuela had urban majorities, and by 1970 it is anticipated that Colombia, Peru and even Brazil will be added to this list. See article 'Peasants and Rural Migrants' by E. J. Hobsbawm in The Politics of Conformity.

[13] *New Left Review*, No. 33, p. 22.

[14] Ibid.

tion without armed struggle'. If it is 'foolish and absurd' to talk of armed struggle in Chile and it is 'irrational optimism' to envisage the possibility of achieving revolution without armed struggle, what is the answer? Again, as in the case of Argentina, flamboyant talk about reformism, opportunism and bourgeois election tactics is combined with an absence of guidance for those who actually have to do the struggling in Chile.

Writing in 1965,[15] he says of Bolivia, that it is the only country where the subjective and objective conditions are best combined. It is 'the only country in South America where a socialist revolution is on the agenda' and it is also 'the *only* country where the revolution might take the classical Bolshevik form' [my emphasis]. He therefore draws the conclusion that the theory of the 'Foco' is, for Bolivia, 'if not inadequate, at any rate secondary'. Yet, it could not have been so long after this statement that Bolivia was chosen as the region where Che Guevara was to devote his considerable talent to the precise purpose of creating guerilla Foci.

In the face of his sweeping prescriptions for most of the regions of this vast continent, it is rather baffling to read the following written by him in 1965:[16]

> Armed struggle absolutely cannot be brandished in Latin America as a categorical imperative or a remedy in itself: armed struggle conducted by whom, one may ask, when, where, with what programme, what alliances? These are concrete problems which no one in the world can resolve abstractly—only the national vanguard which alone carry the weight of the political responsibilities. In other words, the Foco cannot constitute a strategy in itself without condemning itself to failure. It is a moment of struggle whose place can only be defined within an overall integrating strategy.

This is not the only place in the works of Debray where a general proposition is proffered which, either in the very same article or in a subsequent article, is contradicted without any explanation.

For a vanguard to be able to carry out its political responsibilities more is needed than generalised theoretical structures, formal statistical and analytical equipment. It requires assessments by indigenous political activists who know and understand not only the demonstrable facts but who, in addition, have a 'feel' for their people, a sensitivity to their mood and the sort of revolutionary instinct which enables them at every given stage to differentiate between the possible and the fanciful. Surely no outsider can hope to legislate with such aplomb for the different countries, otherwise we will not avoid the

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[15] 'Latin America: The Long March'. *New Left Review*, No. 33, p. 26.
[16] Ibid., p. 35.

same sort of vulgarisation with the so-called 'Cuban model' as occurred with the 'October model'.

CONDITIONS FOR REVOLUTION

In a famous formula (in *'Left-Wing' Communism—an Infantile Disorder*) Lenin stated a 'fundamental law' of revolution as follows:

> It is not enough for revolution that the exploited and the oppressed masses should understand the impossibility of living in the old way and demand changes, it is essential for revolution that the exploiters should not be able to live and rule in the old way . . . revolution is impossible without a nation-wide crisis (affecting both the exploited and the exploiters).

There may well be substance in Debray's claim that inappropriate and mechanical adherence to this formulation, regardless of changing and different conditions, may have acted as an obstacle to revolutionary initiatives by some vanguard parties. Lenin was here discussing the problems of a general insurrection, and not the way in which a revolutionary organisation can, by its political and organisational work, help create favourable objective conditions for the conquest of power. But this has not always been appreciated.

In some countries (including Cuba) the commencement of armed struggle which led to eventual victory was undertaken by groups outside the Communist ranks and in some cases with initial opposition from Communist Parties. There is no doubt (and again Cuba is proof of this) that given certain minimum pre-conditions, the actual commencement and sustaining of guerilla activities operates as an extremely important factor in hastening the evolvement of insurrectionary conditions. In this sense to sit back and wait for the evolvement of the classical objective conditions which constitute a 'revolutionary situation', amounts, in some cases, to a dereliction of leadership duties.

At the same time it is a dangerous illusion, fostered by so many of Debray's expansive and over-generalised formulations, that the injection of armed groups into a country in which there is severe repression will of itself (and subject only to the professional skill of the armed groups) 'slowly spread like an oil patch'.

This neo-Blanquist[17] approach is given emphasis by Debray's

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[17] *Blanquism*—a trend in the French socialist movement headed by Louis August Blanqui (1805-1881). The classics of Marxism-Leninism, while regarding Blanqui as an outstanding revolutionary and adherent of socialism, criticised him for his sectarianism and conspiratorial methods. The Blanquists repudiated the class struggle, expecting the 'emancipation of mankind from wage slavery to be brought about not by means of the class struggle of the proletariat, but through a conspiracy of a small minority of intellectuals' (Lenin).

astounding proposition that the guerilla band must initially shun the civilian peasant population and aim at knocking out the troops of the enemy. He gives as one of his reasons the cultural disparity between the guerillas (mainly students and intellectuals) and the peasants. Can anything be more indicative of the false thesis that the heroic deeds of the revolutionary élite of students and intellectuals will of itself win over the masses and create the objective conditions for the successful transfer of power?

Debray says that the most serious mistake would be to see in the Foco a revival of Blanquism. 'It is a minority certainly, but one which unlike a Blanquist minority of activists, aims to win over the masses before and not after the seizure of power and which makes this the essential condition of the final conquest of power.' Also it is distinguished from Blanquism, because 'it does not in any way aim at a lightning victory or even for a rapid outcome of the revolutionary war.[18] Is there any reason in principle why we should not aim for a rapid outcome of the revolutionary war?

For all his protestations that his theory of the 'Foco' differs fundamentally from Blanquism, there is an extremely important area in which both approaches have a common root—the belief that the actions of the small heroic and dedicated group will on its own stimulate mass support.

This is not a chance departure from Marxist-Leninist concepts relating to the strategy and tactics of revolutionary struggles. It forms part of a consistent pattern arising from Debray's approach to the place of revolutionary theory in the revolutionary struggle, the character of the political vanguard and its relationship to armed struggle.

THE ARMY AND THE PARTY

Debray's fundamental thesis—the crux of his analysis—is on the relationship between the 'Foco' and the political vanguard:

> No part of the guerilla movement has attempted to organise a new party; it seeks rather to wipe out doctrinal or party divisions amongst its own combatants. . . . The most decisive political choice is membership in the guerilla forces, in the Armed Forces of Liberation.[19]

When he talks of the 'Foco' having the right to constitute itself as the vanguard independently of the Marxist-Leninist Parties, he has in mind this sort of broad grouping which differs basically from the vanguard concept in Leninism.

Thus to the question, Can the Party under existing Latin American conditions create the Popular Army or is it up to the Popular Army to

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[18] 'Latin America: The Long March'. *New Left Review*, No. 33, pp. 27-8.
[19] *Revolution in the Revolution*, pp. 104-5.

create the Vanguard? he answers unequivocally 'Eventually the future people's army will beget the party of which it is to be, theoretically the instrument: essentially the party is the army'.[20]

He makes it absolutely clear that his conclusion is not primarily based on a passing state of affairs in which existing vanguards have, as he claims, been ineffective in creating the popular army, *but in the phase preceding the seizure of power, the predominance of the political vanguard, the party, over the military, is not valid for Latin America.*[21] *'The people's army will be the nucleus of the party, not vice versa.'*[22]

He partly attempts to support this proposition by referring in some detail to what he considers to be the harmful effects on the practical conduct of the military struggle, of the existence of two leadership groups—the military and the political. He wrongly suggests that these harmful effects are completely unavoidable when the political vanguard has overall direction of the armed struggle.

But in the main, his conclusions flow logically from what he has said previously on a number of fundamental questions in the course of which it becomes clear that his approach stands in direct conflict with basic and fundamental (not just tactical) principles of Marxism and Leninism. There are of course no 'sacred cows'. That it conflicts with a tenet of Leninism does not automatically condemn a proposition. But when Debray himself and his protagonists claim authority from Lenin in support of his thesis, we are entitled to question this. If it stands in conflict with Leninism we are further entitled to ask whether he has advanced sufficient analysis and argument to make us doubt the historically tested, impressive and profound doctrines of Leninism.

ANTI-LENINIST APPROACH

What has led Debray to the repudiation of the Leninist political vanguard in this stage prior to the seizure of power? It is in the first place his anti-Leninist approach to the whole question of ideology and the role of theory in revolutionary struggle. Witness for example the following references from *Revolution in the Revolution*:

> One may well consider it a stroke of good luck that Fidel had not read the military writings of Mao Tse-tung before disembarking on the coast of Oriente (p. 20).
>
> In that sense (that the Latin American revolutionary war possesses highly special and profoundly distinct conditions of development) all the theoretical works on peoples' war does as much harm as good (p. 21).
>
> The sending of cadres to schools for political studies and the flanking of the military cadres with 'political commissars' is bound to hamper the

[20] Ibid., p. 98.
[21] Ibid., p. 91 and following.
[22] Ibid., p. 116.

natural emergence of popular leaders, of well-rounded military-political leaders (p. 90).
The best teacher of Marxism-Leninism is the enemy, in face to face confrontation during the peoples' war. Study and apprenticeship are necessary, but not decisive. There are no academy-trained cadres (p. 111).

This is quite clearly not just an appeal for a combination of practice with theory, but a denigration of the correct Leninist principle that (historical accidents apart), the leadership of a political struggle (and a peoples' armed struggle is a political struggle by techniques which include organised violence) requires a thorough grasp and understanding of scientific theory. To say that 'the best teacher of Marxism-Leninism is the enemy in face to face confrontation' is a piece of rhetorical nonsense.

This competitive contrast between revolutionary theory and revolutionary practice; this rejection of the true role of theory and its place in a revolutionary struggle, stems from the quite incorrect assumption that the scientific principles of Marxism-Leninism grow naturally and almost spontaneously out of struggle. A clue that this is what Debray believes is contained in the following statement:

There is a further reason why Fidelism lays a greater stress on revolutionary practice, when it is honest and sincere, than on ideological labels: this is the belief that in the special conditions of South America the dynamism of nationalist struggles brings them to a conscious adoption of Marxism.[23]

I emphasise this because if Debray is correct in his contention that the acceptance of correct ideology and scientific socialism will arise, in the special conditions of Latin America[24] from the very process of struggle, then indeed, it is not vital to start off with a theoretical grasp of scientific principles nor a vanguard party to propagate them. The struggle will create all this.

But this belief that a people or a class which is engaged 'in honest and sincere revolutionary practice' will of necessity arrive at the correct ideological termini, is an old illusion advanced in the revolutionary movement not for the first time. It was at the nub of the thesis of the Russian 'Economists' and their German Revisionist counterparts.

Many of our Revisionist critics believe that Marx asserted that economic development and the class struggle create not only the conditions for socialist production, but also, and directly, the consciousness of its necessity. . . . The proletariat becomes conscious of the possibility and of the

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[23] 'Latin America: The Long March'. *New Left Review*, No. 33, p. 54.
[24] The special conditions referred to are that 'The struggle against imperialism does not take the form of a front against foreign forces of occupation, but proceeds by means of revolutionary civil war'.

> necessity for socialism. In this connection socialist consciousness appears to be a necessary and direct result of the proletarian class struggle. But this is absolutely untrue. Of course, socialism as a doctrine has its roots in modern economic relationships just as the class struggle of the proletariat has . . . But socialism and the class struggle arise side by side and not out of the other; each arises under different conditions. Modern socialist consciousness can arise only on the basis of profound scientific knowledge. . . . There can be no talk of an independent ideology being developed by the masses of the workers themselves in the process of the movement. . . . There is a lot of talk about spontaneity but the spontaneous development of the working-class movement leads to its becoming subordinated to the bourgeois ideology.[25]

And if it is true of workers in direct conflict with their class enemy that, left to themselves, they tend towards bourgeois rather than proletarian ideology, how much more true is this of a struggle whose main content is national in character. What is there special about Latin America that Debray can claim that there as a general rule, 'the Party . . . will be formed and its cadres will be selected through the natural processes of the liberation struggle as happened in Cuba.[26]

We may note that even in Cuba the Communist Party was not a pure product of the natural processes of the struggle initiated by the July 26th Movement, but came into existence as a result of an amalgamation of the July 26th Movement and the Peoples' Socialist Party (old Communist Party) which in all the works of Debray is mentioned only once, and that in a footnote.

He describes the coming into being of the Cuban Communist Party as follows: 'The Party is the same age as the Revolution, it will be fourteen on July 26th, 1967. Moncada was the nucleus of the rebel army which was in turn the nucleus of the party. Around this nucleus and only because it already had its own political-military leadership, other political forces have been able to assemble and unite forming what is today the Communist Party of Cuba.'[27] Ignored completely is the fact that the PSP over a period of many years had done a great deal to prepare the ground for the socialist revolution.

Debray does say that his theory applies only to the preparatory stage of the seizure of power and that a communist party becomes indispensable only after victory for the construction of socialism. He argues that an anti-imperialist national liberation struggle in a colonial or semi-colonial territory cannot be conducted under the banner of Marxism-Leninism or the leadership of the working class 'for obvious reasons'.[28]

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[25] Lenin: *What is to be Done?* (approvingly quoting Karl Kautsky).
[26] 'Latin America: The Long March.' *New Left Review*, No. 33, p. 38.
[27] *Revolution in the Revolution*, p. 106.
[28] 'Latin America: The Long March.' *New Left Review*, No. 33, p. 38.

As a general proposition this is neither obvious nor correct. The banner of Marxism-Leninism in the type of territory referred to is precisely anti-imperialism and national liberation. And where there is a sufficiently developed working class, there is every reason why it should either on its own or in alliance (as in Vietnam) lead the national liberation struggle.

Lenin says of armed struggle that it 'must be ennobled by the enlightened and organising influence of socialism. And without this latter condition *every* [Lenin's emphasis], positively every, method of struggle in bourgeois society approximates the proletariat to the position of the various non-proletarian strata above and below it, and if left to the spontaneous course of events, becomes frayed, corrupted and prostituted'.[29]

Debray draws attention to what he describes as a significant detail: 'During the two years of warfare, Fidel did not hold a single political rally in his zone of operations'.[30] We cannot presume to question the wisdom of this approach by Castro in the specific circumstances which faced him. The example is, however, invoked to counterpose the superiority of revolutionary practice over revolutionary theory, action against propaganda—as if these were exclusive concepts instead of being interwoven and complementary.

There is, in any case, evidence that the Cuban leaders do not altogether go along with Debray's rejection of the vanguard, his militaristic approach to political struggle in Latin America and his dismissal of almost every form of struggle short of violence (or preparation for it) as non-revolutionary. In his closing address to the August 1967 OLAS Conference, Castro insisted that 'the guerilla war must be organised by a political movement, by a political organisation' and the report of the Cuban delegation contained the following: 'The fact that the people's army is organised in the country and that the development of a mass peasant movement is of fundamental importance, does not mean that the leadership of the struggle must not be guided by a proletarian ideology. On the contrary, the ideas of the proletariat (and its best cadres) must be at the head of this struggle. *We are dealing with a war waged in the country, but not with a peasant war*' [emphasis in text].

THE VANGUARD CLASSES

Having 'renovated' Bolshevik strategy to the point at which one of its most fundamental tenets—the role of a Marxist-Leninist vanguard armed with scientific theory—is, in effect, completely denied

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[29] Lenin: *Partisan Warfare*.
[30] *Revolution in the Revolution*, p. 54.

prior to the conquest of power, the next step is a rejection of the traditional Marxist-Leninist concept of the working class as a vanguard class in the revolutionary struggle (which Lenin described as 'the main thing in the doctrine of Marx').[31] His claim that 'the Cuban Revolution has established that in the insurrectionary phase of the revolution, while it is indispensable to have some sort of organisation and a firm political leadership (July 26th Movement), it is possible to do without a vanguard Marxist-Leninist Party of the working class' is in harmony with his generalised contention that in Latin American conditions the revolutionary struggle cannot be led by the working class.

This contention has its roots not only in the incorrect claim that a working class cannot lead an anti-imperialist national liberation struggle in a colonial or semi-colonial country, but, it appears, that it is the very character of the urban proletariat which makes it generally unfit to lead a revolutionary armed struggle. The city, says Debray, can 'bourgeoisify' the proletarians while the mountain 'as we know' 'proletarianises' the bourgeoisie and the peasants. The tactical conflicts in a movement conceal a class conflict in which the interests of the proletariat are not 'paradoxically enough on the side which one would expect'.[32] He quotes Che Guevara as saying that the rebel army is already ideologically proletarian and thinks like a dispossessed class whilst the city remains petty bourgeois, contains future traitors amongst its leaders and is very influenced by the milieu in which it develops.

Debray in his denigration of the role of the proletariat may well have been influenced by the theoretical writing of Frantz Fanon.[33] But unlike Fanon, he does not proceed to the conclusion that the peasantry is the vanguard class since, the

> illiterate peasants . . . suffocated by centuries of 'social peace' under a feudal regime . . . cannot be awakened or acquire political consciousness by a process of thought, reflection and reading. . . . They will be followers of 'propaganda by facts'.[34]

Since the national bourgeoisie has been excluded from playing any significant role, to which class falls the role of vanguard in the revolutionary struggle? It appears that in Latin America the 'irony of history willed . . . the assignment of . . . this vanguard role to students and revolutionary intellectuals who have to unleash or rather initiate the

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[31] Lenin: *Marx-Engels Marxism.*
[32] Debray: *Revolution in the Revolution*, pp. 76-7.
[33] Frantz Fanon: *Wretched of the Earth.*
[34] 'Latin America: The Long March.' *New Left Review*, No. 33, p. 41.

highest form of class struggle'[35] and 'The students are in the vanguard of the revolution in Latin America'. This latter fact makes it possible, according to Debray, to set up secondary centres of armed struggle in the towns not, *mark you*, amongst the working class, but in the universities.[36]

On this question of the role of the proletariat as well as on the questions already considered of ideology and the vanguard party, Debray betrays a sort of static empiricism which denudes much of what he says of its value.

Although he correctly expresses a distaste for the setting up of 'revolutionary models' whether it be Russian, Chinese or Cuban (he even expresses the hope that the word 'Fidelism' will disappear)[37] the overall impact of his thesis is precisely to set up the Cuban experience as a model for all in Latin America. Such an approach may well continue to encourage many militants to embark on the type of action which, he concedes, has already led to the destruction of half a hundred revolutionary organisations.

The Cuban revolution and its leadership has made an incalculable contribution to the storehouse of revolutionary theory and practice. But in assessing the Cuban experience two errors must be avoided. The one is the rejection of some of its vital lessons on the parrot-cry, 'but Cuba was different'. The other is an inability to determine what in the Cuban revolution has universal, and what has purely local, application.

Both in regard to the Cuban Revolution and other major revolutionary experiences of the twentieth century, Debray tends to confuse the general with the particular. Thus, having correctly spoken about the harm which the unthinking application of the 'October' model did, he proceeds to discuss modern revolutionary processes as if the whole of Lenin's theoretical contribution on this vital question is an anachronism for most of Latin America. In the same way having correctly differentiated the conditions of the struggle in China and Vietnam from those applying in Latin America, he shows an inability to extract from these revolutions the valid theoretical lessons which have universal application.

Surely one of the most fundamental lessons of all these enriching experiences is the *absolute* necessity of revolutionary political leadership guided by a grasp of scientific revolutionary theory. Of course, just as history continues to move even if man is ignorant of its laws, so revolutions and armed struggle have occurred, and will continue

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[35] *Revolution in the Revolution*, p. 21.
[36] 'Latin America: The Long March.' *New Left Review*, No. 33, p. 31.
[37] Ibid., p. 58.

to occur, in given objective conditions even in the absence of a vanguard party or a single person who understands scientific theory. But if Leninism has taught us anything it is surely this: the existence of such a vanguard group equipped with knowledge and an understanding of the science of struggle not only speeds up the process but makes more certain that the fruits of victory are not snatched away. How many 'people's' armed struggles have we seen in recent decades in which most of the participants were 'honest and sincere' and ready to die and yet the 'natural' process of the struggle generated either a militarist dictatorship or gave birth to right-wing regimes.

With Rousseau-like romanticism Debray insists that 'by a collective working of the soil' and so on the guerillas are forced to 'proletarianise' themselves morally and ideologically. 'It is almost impossible' says Debray 'that a Foco, the embryo of a popular army, should develop militarist tendencies.' This is not analysis but rhetoric. It is a rare and almost accidental phenomenon that revolutionary struggles, whether armed or not, lead to the sort of victory all of us desire without the guidance of a political revolutionary vanguard of the Leninist type.

That is why we must reject the new dogma which Debray advances that in most of Latin America 'at the present juncture, the principal stress must be laid on the development of guerilla warfare and not on the strengthening of existing parties or the creation of new parties'.[38] The absence of a vanguard or its weakness is undoubtedly one of the prime factors in determining whether subjective conditions for the effective development of guerilla warfare exist. In any case why must we regard the two tasks as being so mutually contradictory? Only on Debray's false thesis that a 'real party' can only arise from a guerilla force which 'is the political vanguard *in nuce*'.[39]

A VANGUARD IS ESSENTIAL

It is, of course, true that the fact that the word 'Communist' is part of an organisation's name does not automatically transform it into a vanguard, nor can it claim exclusive ownership of the revolution, except by the calibre of its leadership and actions. The failures and mistakes of some parties in no way detracts from the fact that a political vanguard is indispensable. It is neither Debray nor any other stranger to a situation who has the capacity to carry the burden of deciding the question of the commencement of any specific form of action and to guide its development. Debray's passionate appeal for action everywhere—which really amounts to an exhortation for

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[38] ibid., p. 116.
[39] ibid., p. 116.

every man to become his own Castro—falls into the category of a cure which is more pernicious than the disease.

- The fact that individual revolutionary geniuses arise who are capable, almost instinctively, of applying correct principles to a given situation even without knowledge of them (as Debray claims of Castro and his group) in no way invalidates the Leninist thesis of the vanguard. The invocation of the Cuban example in support of the generalised contention that in Latin America the Popular Army gives birth to the vanguard and not vice versa, is a fallacy. The precise way in which the two streams of the leadership of the Cuban Revolution—the PSP and the July 26th Movement—eventually merged to form the present Communist Party of Cuba, requires detailed historical description which is not evident in Debray's work. But to deal with the Cuban situation as if the history of the struggle for workers' power began in 1957, is to do violence to truth.

Revolution is a complex and challenging art. Its tactical and strategic tasks do not remain static but depend on the never-ceasing interplay and positioning of class forces both internationally and nationally, the interaction of objective and subjective factors and so on. *To put it at its lowest we must doubt the adequacy of the 'Foco', isolated from the masses both in town and countryside and unified only by war and its immediate political objectives, to give overall political guidance.*

The impressive points made by Debray on the disadvantages of attempting to conduct the tactical aspects of the guerilla struggle from the cities or on the need for the political leadership, or sections of it, to join the armed groups, do not form a legitimate basis for the liquidation or the disregard of national vanguards. It in no way follows, as Debray believes, that the man wielding the gun is the most suited to determine overall revolutionary strategy.

Who gives guidance to the peasantry? Who mobilises the urban workers in support of the armed struggle? Who decides, in relation to the total situation, the course of the armed struggle including the need that may arise to intensify it—or even temporarily, to call it off? The 'Foco', almost by definition is on its own incapable of this because of lack of contact with the total situation, and because, certainly in the initial stages, it has no cohesive ideological basis.

A contrary view can only be sustained by a false belief that only *he* is 'making' the revolution who physically confronts the enemy with a gun in hand. Not only does this approach distort the place of armed struggle in integrated overall revolutionary strategy, but it is based on the mystical belief that the 'people' will inevitably and without ideological and organisational preparation, follow the example of the 'heroic group'. In addition it incorporates the fallacy that this

heroic group will, through the baptism of fire, evolve towards Marxism and stand ready to be the Marxist-Leninist vanguard when the construction of socialism is on the agenda.

This sort of military economism has nothing in common with Leninism—a name under which it parades. It is presumptuous because it seeks to give a flood of over-generalised advice to almost a whole continent. It is harmful because it gives birth to, and nurtures the subjective illusion that revolutions can be 'made' rather than led. Above all, in its emphasis on the primacy of revolutionary practice over revolutionary theory it is anti-scientific because it destroys the harmony which should be aimed for between the two and replaces it with a crude sort of determinism which has very little in common with Leninism.

A Centenary Tribute

JAMES CONNOLLY OF IRELAND

Sean Redmond

THIS YEAR MARKS the centenary of the birth of James Connolly, Socialist, trade union leader and Irish Patriot.

Commemorations are being held in Ireland and Britain, but James Connolly deserves to be more widely remembered.

Students of Irish history will know that he was one of the leaders of the 1916 Easter Rebellion, and that he was subsequently executed. This alone entitles him to a place of honour. But Connolly left a deeper mark on the pages of history. His whole life was devoted to uplifting the working class. He was a prolific writer and was one of the most original thinkers of the early socialist movement. His contribution to socialist philosophy is particularly relevant today. The relationship between socialism and nationalism he singled out for special attention. He believed that they were not antagonistic, but were part of the same struggle for the reorganisation of society.

James Connolly was born in Edinburgh on June 5th, 1868, the son of Irish immigrants. At the age of fourteen he joined the British army, for a period of seven years. He was stationed in Ireland and thus made his first acquaintance with the land of his parents. At an early age he became interested in Irish politics, then dominated by the struggle for Home Rule, led by Parnell. The Irish were supported by the more advanced sections of the British Labour movement, and it was not surprising that Connolly, now back in Scotland and free from Her Majesty's service, should become involved in the Scottish Labour movement. He quickly made his mark, both as a speaker and writer, and in 1895 stood as a Labour candidate for the Edinburgh corporation.

In 1896 with his wife and children, Connolly moved to Dublin. He had accepted the post of paid organiser for the Dublin Socialist Club. Socialism had existed in Ireland since the eighteen-forties, but it had not found fertile ground. Unemployment made victimisation easy. To which was added confusion on the question of evolving correct tactics

for a socialist movement within a subject nation. The initiative was continually in the hands of middle-class nationalists.

Connolly rallied the scattered socialist elements and formed a new organisation, the Irish Socialist Republican Party. While it was based on the principles of Marx and scientific socialism, this was the first attempt in Ireland to form a socialist organisation based on Irish conditions. Years later Connolly wrote:

> The Irish Socialist Republican Party was formed in Dublin by a few working men whom the author had succeeded in interesting in his proposition that the two currents of revolutionary thought in Ireland, the socialist and the nationalist, were not antagonistic but complementary, and that the Irish socialist was in reality the best patriot, but in order to convince the Irish people of that fact he must first learn to look inward upon Ireland for his justification, rest his arguments upon the facts of Irish history, and be a champion against the subjection of Ireland and all that it implies. That the Irish question was at bottom an economic one, and that the economic question must first be able to function nationally before it could function internationally, and as socialists are opposed to all oppression, so should they ever be foremost in the daily battle against all its manifestations, social and political.

In 1902 Connolly visited America. His fame had spread across the Atlantic and he was invited to undertake a lecture tour on behalf of the Socialist Labour Party. He was to spend seven years in the U.S.A. Connolly's first work in America was with the Socialist Labour Party, the party of Daniel De Leon. The S.L.P. believed in class struggle, but it was founded on De Leon's dogmatic interpretation of Marxism. Connolly clashed with De Leon and broke with the S.L.P. He then became an organiser for the Industrial Workers of the World (I.W.W.) followed by a spell as organiser for the Socialist Party of America.

STORMY PERIOD IN IRELAND

In 1910 he decided to return to Ireland. The situation had changed and the climate was favourable for his return. The Irish Transport and General Workers' Union had been formed by Jim Larkin. With its appeal to the hitherto unorganised unskilled workers and its glorious militancy it met with rapid success. The socialist movement was reviving and a decision had been taken to amalgamate the various groups into one socialist party. Connolly became the organiser of the newly-formed Socialist Party of Ireland, and later the Belfast organiser of the Transport Union. He retained a Union post until his death.

Ireland was on the threshold of a period of revolution, which was to last until 1923. A Bill to concede Home Rule, was passing through the British Parliament. Imperialism had been forced to this position. But the pro-British elements in the area round Belfast (now Northern

Ireland) had raised an army to oppose Home Rule. Connolly had to fight their attempts to divide the workers on religious grounds as well as fighting on another front. In 1913 industrial war broke out in Dublin. With Home Rule round the corner, as they thought, the Irish capitalists were out to smash the militancy of the working class.

They declared war on the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union. An eight-month lockout ensued, amid appalling scenes of police brutality. Three workers were clubbed to death by the police and many others injured. The workers replied by forming the Irish Citizen Army, possibly the first worker's army in the world. The lockout ended in the early part of 1914. While the men went back, bloody but unbowed, the employers had failed in their main objective, to destroy the Union.

Soon after, Larkin went to America, and Connolly was in command. One of his first actions was to reform the Irish Citizen Army and give it a new constitution. It now took on a new role. It was to be the vanguard in the fight for Irish freedom and socialism.

James Connolly lived in the period of Empire building. Imperialist propaganda was thick on the ground, and it took many forms. The working class movement was not free of it. Many a socialist echoed imperialist ideas, frequently without knowing it. This was reflected in right-wing opportunism on the one hand, and 'left' sectarianism on the other. Many socialists looked upon the demand for national independence as irrelevant, a 'red-herring' to divert the workers from their true goal. Socialism was posed as an alternative. The citizen of a subject nation was hailed as a progressive if he embraced socialism, and damned as a reactionary if he placed the independence of his country to the fore. Connolly would have none of this. He stood for the right of all countries to self-determination, and advanced the correct Marxist conception of 'internationalism', as agreements and pacts between free nations, freely entered into.

Connolly's goal was socialism—A 'Workers Republic'. But socialism could not exist in an oppressed country. Therefore national independence was the first prerequisite. He wrote:

> Is it not well and fitting that we of the working class should fight for the freedom of the nation from foreign rule, as the first requisite for the free development of the national powers needed for our class?

WORKERS SHOULD LEAD

However, Irish history had taught him that landlords and capitalists make bad revolutionaries. He claimed the working class as 'the only incorruptible inheritors of the fight for Irish freedom'. Hence the struggle for a free Ireland had to be based on the working class. He

was not opposed to the unity of all who were prepared to fight imperialism. Rather he sought it. But the working class should lead. Once national independence had been achieved, the way would be open and the weapons forged for the advance to socialism.

Connolly saw quite clearly that national independence would not be enough. As early as 1897 he foresaw the role of neo-colonialism. He wrote:

> If you remove the English army tomorrow and hoist the green flag over Dublin Castle, unless you set about the organisation of a Socialist Republic your efforts will be in vain.
> England would still rule you. She would rule you through her capitalists, through her landlords, through her financiers, through the whole array of commercial and individualist institutions she has planted in this country and watered with the tears of our mothers and the blood of our martyrs.

Prophetic words! Ireland is still financially dominated by Britain, while we see Cuba as an example at the other end of the scale. The advance to socialism was necessary to achieve a complete break with imperialism.

WAR—AND THE EASTER RISING

The war clouds were gathering in Europe and in 1914 war broke out. This was the chance Connolly was waiting for. Now or never; Ireland must strike for her freedom. Connolly's attitude to the war was characteristic. While the majority of European socialists outdid each other in displays of chauvinism, Connolly denounced it as an imperialist war. His attitude was expressed in a banner erected over Liberty Hall, the Transport Union's Head Office in Dublin. It read: 'We serve neither King nor Kaiser, but Ireland.' But he hoped a revolution in Ireland would serve a wider purpose.

> Ireland may yet set the torch to a European conflagration that will not burn out until the last throne and the last capitalist bond and debenture will be shrivelled on the funeral pyre of the last war lord.

The Citizen Army was put on a war footing and he began to prepare for an armed rising. 1913 had also witnessed the formation of the Irish Volunteers, whose chief-of-staff was Eoin MacNeill, a university professor of moderate nationalist views. But behind the scenes the Volunteers were controlled by the Irish Republican Brotherhood, a secret organisation committed to a complete break with England and the establishment of an Irish Republic. Its leaders were known to Connolly. Most of them had supported the workers during the 1913 lockout. Like Connolly they had come to the conclusion that an armed rising should be attempted while England was at war. The outcome was the 1916 Rebellion, when the Citizen Army and the

Volunteers joined forces. Unfortunately MacNeill got wind of what was afoot and issued countermanding orders. As a result a badly depleted force took the field and the rising was mainly confined to the Dublin area.

At noon on Easter Monday they seized prominent buildings in the centre of Dublin. From the steps of the General Post Office, Patrick Pearse read the Proclamation which announced the setting up of an Irish Republic. The Republic guaranteed to cherish 'all of the children of the nation equally'. The seven signatories of the Proclamation had formed themselves into a provisional government. James Connolly, who commanded the forces in the Dublin area, was one of them.

The Rising lasted a week. British troops were rushed to Ireland to supplement those already there. A gunboat was brought up the River Liffey and before long the centre of Dublin was in ruins. The insurgents surrendered unconditionally, but they had struck a blow which reverberated throughout the British Empire. Connolly, although badly wounded and in great agony, was brought before a court-martial, with the other leaders. The British authorities wasted no time. Fourteen men were executed, including Connolly. He was the last to die. On May 12th he was taken from his hospital bed, propped in a chair and shot.

Connolly's death shocked the Labour movement of the world, but as he anticipated, his actions were misunderstood. Socialists wondered how he became involved in a nationalist rising. But Lenin rebuked Radek and others who belittled the rising. 'Owing to the crisis of imperialism,' he wrote, 'flames of national revolt have burst out in the colonies and in Europe.'

The 1916 Rising changed Ireland and brought a resurgent national movement. Following the 1918 General Election in which they won a majority of the Irish seats, the Republicans refused to sit in London. Instead they assembled in Dublin and constituted an Irish parliament, Dail Eireann. Britain declared this parliament illegal and flooded Ireland with troops. After two years of fierce fighting a truce was agreed. But not before Britain had established a separate 'state' based on the pro-British minority in the north-east, the 'Ian Smiths of Ireland'. With this in the bag they put the squeeze on the middle-class leaders of the Irish national movement. A treaty was signed, which brought civil war to Ireland, but which left partition intact, gave political independence to the rest of the country (now the Republic of Ireland) and left British neo-colonialism dominant overall. Unfortunately during these crucial years the Labour movement lacked a leader with Connolly's genius and vision.

Ireland is still partitioned and held to ransom by British imperialism, despite the outward trappings of an independent state. Our capitalist

leaders have compromised and have settled for the 'crumbs from the rich man's table'. But a new spirit is alive in Ireland. After years in the wilderness the Irish anti-imperialist movement is once more back on the correct path. The commemoration in 1966 of the 50th anniversary of the Easter Rising stirred the imagination of the youth. James Connolly is coming into his own. His writings are available and are in great demand. And the activities surrounding the centenary of his birth have stimulated further interest.

Connolly's teachings are seen as the key to solving present problems. His predictions on neo-colonialism and the effects of partition have been proved correct. And his class consciousness will unite the workers north and south into one movement, which will free Ireland from coast to coast and place the country on the road to socialism. In the words of his biographer, C. Desmond Greaves, 'James Connolly engraved socialism indelibly on the national life of Ireland'. He remains an inspiration and a guide for freedom fighters the world over.

BOOK REVIEWS

Jack Woddis on Neo-Colonialism

Introduction to Neo-Colonialism, by Jack Woddis (Lawrence & Wishart, 7s. 6d.).

NEO-COLONIALISM, IN THE countries of Western Europe and North America, tends to be regarded even by some democratically minded people as something of a phoney concept, a piece of slogan-mongering. And yet it is a dominant experience of political and economic life for virtually every country in the Third World, a blatant reality which pervades all political conflicts, all attempts at economic development.

Ask an African what is meant by neo-colonialism, and he will tell you of the overthrow of Nkrumah by the Sandhurst-trained army officers, or of French paratroops propping up the rotten regime of the late unlamented Leon Mba of Gabon, or of the catastrophic fall in the price of cocoa, or of coffee, or sisal, or groundnuts, manipulated by the monopolies. An Arab could reel off the instances of British and American-backed Israeli aggression; an Asian of economic penetration and the establishment of military bases by the U.S. from Okinawa to the Persian Gulf; a Latin American, with longer experience of Yanqui neo-colonialism than anyone else, of the overthrow of the Arbenz popular government of Guatemala, of a dozen military putsches, of the Bay of Pigs, of the Alliance for Progress. And so on.

Now, Jack Woddis, prominent British Marxist and the author of three fine books on Africa, has synthesised these experiences, and subjected them to a powerful political analysis, in his *Introduction to Neo-Colonialism*. As the title implies, he does not claim to have exhausted the subject.

But what this book does is to set neo-colonialism in the context of its predecessor, colonialism, and to relate it to the general strategy of imperialism in the second half of our century. Woddis explains, in his customarily precise, well-documented way, how the rising forces of

national liberation and socialism have forced the imperialists, and particularly the United States, to adopt new measures to try and contain the march of independence and social progress. He shows beyond doubt that neo-colonialism is a conscious, state-organised operation, an integral part of the foreign policies of the imperialist powers, and not merely a conglomeration of actions by individual capitalist firms. He is expert at getting the neo-colonialists to condemn themselves with their own statements, assembling an impressive array of damaging statements of fact and intention by imperialist spokesmen. He dissects the grotesque body of lies which surrounds imperialist economic aid, and proves that, from profits and dividends on investments, from manipulation of world commodity prices, from the unequal balance of trade, from exorbitant interest rates on loans, the imperialist countries gain far more in cash than they pay out in aid. On no less an authority than the President of the U.S.-dominated World Bank, we learn that, if the present trend continues, in twelve or thirteen years time the developing countries will be *paying out as much* in interest and capital repayments on loan 'aid' as they are receiving. In other words, every penny lent to the poor countries will immediately be repaid to cover earlier debts!

Mr. Woddis shows forcefully how increasing counter-revolutionary violence, the search for new investments and new markets, and the need to keep socialism at bay are all intimately linked in the policy of neo-colonialism. And he sounds a warning against a glib acceptance of the fact that imperialism is in retreat.

> This is only a general truth for the whole epoch in which we live. It does not mean that the imperialists can no longer launch attacks, that they no longer dominate countries, whole regions, or almost entire continents . . . As long as imperialism exists the democratic rights of the people, their national independence, their social and economic advance, and world peace itself, are in danger . . . It would therefore be foolish to underestimate the strength of neo-colonialism. The majority of the new states of Africa and Asia and practically the whole of Latin America are still subject to its influence, in some cases almost completely so.

The only solution, Mr. Woddis emphasises, is for the people of the Third World to do battle against the internal agents of imperialism, if necessary with arms in hand. For, as this book makes perfectly plain, there can be no compromise: either we fight, or go under.

A. LANGA.

From the Preparatory Commission for the Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties (see Editorial Note: 'Towards Communist Unity') we reproduce the Communiqué and extracts from the contribution of the representative of the South African Communist Party.

COMMUNIQUÉ

THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE for the International Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties held a meeting in Budapest from April 24th to 28th.

The representatives of the following fifty-four parties took part in the meeting:

Communist Party of the United States of America, Communist Party of Argentina, Communist Party of Austria, Communist Party of Belgium, Bulgarian Communist Party, Brazilian Communist Party, Communist Party of Chile, Progressive Party of the Working People of Cyprus, People's Vanguard Party of Costa Rica, Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, Communist Party of Denmark, South African Communist Party, Communist Party of Finland, French Communist Party, Communist Party of Greece, Guatemalan Party of Labour, Communist Party of Honduras, Communist Party of India, Iraqi Communist Party, People's Party of Iran, Communist Party of Israel, Communist Party of Jordan, Communist Party of Canada, Communist Party of Colombia, Polish United Workers' Party, Communist Party of Lesotho, Lebanese Communist Party, Communist Party of Luxemburg, Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, Moroccan Communist Party, Martinique Communist Party, Mexican Communist Party, Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party, Communist Party of Great Britain, Communist Party of Germany, Socialist Unity Party of Germany, Socialist Unity Party of Germany—West Berlin, Italian Communist Party, People's Party of Panama, Communist Party of

Paraguay, Peruvian Communist Party, Portuguese Communist Party, Puerto Rican Communist Party, Communist Party of El Salvador, Communist Party of Spain, Swiss Party of Labour, Syrian Communist Party, Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Communist Party of Sudan, Communist Party of Turkey, Tunisian Communist Party, Communist Party of Uruguay, Communist Party of Venezuela, and the representatives of a fraternal Party working in illegality.

Fifteen additional fraternal Parties have stated that they will attend the International Conference, but that for various objective reasons they could not send their representatives to take part in the Meeting of the Preparatory Committee.

The representatives of all the participating fraternal Parties took the floor in the discussion.

The speakers touched upon a wide range of questions concerned with the struggle against imperialism and with the united action of Communist and Workers' Parties and all anti-imperialist forces, and made proposals on the problems to be examined at the Conference.

The Preparatory Committee agreed that the International Conference will begin on November 25th, 1968.

The Preparatory Committee examined the question of the content of the draft documents and the methods of working them out, and other questions pertaining to the preparation of the Conference.

The Preparatory Committee established a working group to work out the materials for the International Conference. Any party may join the working group if it so wishes.

The working group held its first session on April 28th.

The Preparatory Committee will discuss all the proposals of the working group at its next meeting in September. The Preparatory Committee will send the material prepared to the Central Committees of all the Communist and Workers' Parties.

The Preparatory Committee calls upon all the Communist and Workers' Parties which have as yet not taken part in the preparations for the International Conference to join in this work in order to contribute to the united action of the Communist movement and of all the anti-imperialist forces.

The Preparatory Committee requests all Parties which cannot take part in the preparatory work by sending representatives, to send to the Preparatory Committee their materials and proposals on the items on the agenda of the International Conference.

The work of the Preparatory Committee took place in an atmosphere in a comradely and frank exchange of opinions, and demonstrated that the Communist and Workers' Parties are increasing their efforts for international co-operation in the struggle for common aims.

S.A.C.P. CONTRIBUTION

COMRADES,

Our Central Committee warmly welcomed the report of our delegation on the proceedings and outcome of the Consultative Meeting in Budapest two months ago. We regard it as an important step on the road to closer Communist Unity, and hence to the rallying of all anti-imperialist forces.

Our Party was particularly impressed by the tireless work, the efficient organisation, the democratic spirit and the patience shown by our hosts, the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party. In the interests of our unity, they have spared no efforts, and have also had to endure coarse insults which were directed at all of us. We must express our indignation at such treatment of our comrades, acting on our behalf, and our full sympathy and solidarity with them.

Comrades, I want to make some specific remarks about the content of the documents for the Conference, or perhaps I should rather say, about the content of the Conference itself. When our delegation addressed the Consultative Meeting here two months ago we said very little about such questions, because we concentrated on the need for, and specific proposals concerning the calling of, the World Conference.

Before I come to deal with specific themes, I want to make a few remarks about the nature of the coming conference and the corresponding form, our documents should assume. Our Conference is not a seminar of learned scientists; it is a gathering of fighting revolutionaries. It should not produce a thesis in specialised language which can be deciphered only by an expert. It should produce a stirring call, a message addressed in plain words to the common man.

In a very profound sense, imperialism has already lost the ideological struggle. The overwhelming majority of the people of the world live in countries whose development has been retarded by imperialist robbery and exploitation. Their living standards are actually declining, both relatively to the imperialist countries and in many cases absolutely, because the neo-colonialists rig the world markets to ensure that primary products are always getting cheaper and manufactures dearer. What does imperialism and capitalism offer these starving and desperate millions? Advice to have fewer babies, attempts to corrupt their leaders, 'aid' that turns out usually to be a profitable exercise in monopoly investment or money-lending, and threats of napalm and mass murder if they misbehave.

No wonder that capitalism has become a dirty word throughout Africa—probably in other continents as well. Comrades have spoken here, and correctly so, of the fresh economic and monetary crisis of imperialism. There is also a political, ideological and moral crisis; bourgeois ideologists and sociologists are more than ever sterile, lost in abstractions and word-spinning; bourgeois political parties more brazenly unprincipled and careerist. Wide sections of the public, especially the youth, have lost all confidence in them.

I think that this situation faces us with tremendous opportunities and tremendous responsibilities. But we will not measure up to those responsibilities if we content ourselves with merely repeating formulae. Our great movement, like any other, stands in need of constant renovation if it is to advance. This is not an appeal for 'Revisionism'. It is an appeal to apply our tried Marxist-Leninist theory creatively and collectively to the new problems, to emerge with a contemporary message, a challenge.

Concerning the themes of the Conference, to be foreshadowed in our documents:

I consider the proposals of Comrades Ponomarev, Kanapa and Axen to have been very suitable, as well as suggestions by a number of other delegates. I agree with them and do not propose to take up your time repeating what others have said.

However, there are two important matters which I think have not featured sufficiently and which should be included in our discussion and our documents.

AFRICA

The first is the increasingly critical situation developing in *Africa* and especially in the South.

Comrades are no doubt aware that for more than two years the African freedom fighters in the Portuguese colonies of Guinea-Bissau, Angola and Mozambique have been engaged in armed combat with ever-increasing numbers of troops of the fascist Salazar regime and liberating substantial areas of African territory from the invaders.

Since last August, an even more critical front has been opened, the armed struggle waged by the combined forces of the Zimbabwe African People's Union and the African National Congress of South Africa against the Smith regime. The battles which have already taken place, though limited in extent and in the number of freedom-fighters involved have already seriously shaken the Smith regime, which has suffered heavy casualties. The number of casualties is being treated

by them as a military secret; they have commandeered a number of hospitals for the military and are holding funerals in strict secrecy.

Not only have they mobilised their reserves, they have called for and received massive support in both material and military personnel from the Republic of South Africa. It is no exaggeration to say that six months of fighting, especially the offensive which began last month in March and is still continuing, has done more to shake the Smith regime than all the years of fraudulent and ineffective 'sanctions' imposed at the initiative of the United Kingdom by the United Nations.

It is mainly because of the remarkable successes of the freedom-fighters, that Britain has now gone to propose fresh sanctions at the Security Council.

It goes without saying that these sanctions, like the previous ones, will be futile and ineffective, because the imperialist powers refuse to envisage a confrontation with the fascist Republic of South Africa. South Africa openly flouts the sanctions, just as it flouts all U.N. decisions, on apartheid, on South-West Africa, on all other issues. And nothing is done about it because South Africa is the major base and bastion of imperialism in the continent of Africa.

Rhodesia today is an economic, political and military dependency of South Africa.

Some of the main features of the A.N.C.-Z.A.P.U. armed struggle are the following:

1. The high standard of courage, political consciousness and military skill shown by the freedom-fighters and their leaders.
2. The enthusiastic reception and support accorded to the guerrillas by the African population.
3. The fact that the guerrillas have established bases deep within Rhodesia. They have been fighting within sixty miles of the capital, Salisbury, and in other areas as well.

I emphasise this final point because the Pretoria and Salisbury regimes constantly spread the lying propaganda that they are fighting so-called 'terrorists' and so-called 'infiltrators' who come from across the Zambesi River, from Zambia.

The purpose of this propaganda is sinister indeed. Recently the S.A. Defence Minister, Botha, spoke approvingly in the white Parliament about the way in which Israel opposes what it calls 'terrorism' by making aggressive raids across the borders of neighbouring Arab states.

The threat and the danger is clear. The imperialist, racialist monopoly bourgeoisie of the Republic of South Africa is threatening war, threatening aggression against independent African states, against

Zambia, against Tanzania—and in fact against the whole of liberated Africa.

I should like to make it very clear, comrades, that the South African Communist Party is totally committed to and in support of the armed struggle for the overthrow of white supremacy in South Africa. Our members are taking part in it, in accordance with the policy of our Central Committee. Our Party has no differences on all matters of the strategy and aims of the liberation movement of our country, the African National Congress and the united front of which it is the recognised spokesman.

Comrades, I am raising this matter here because I consider it an issue of crucial importance to Africa, to peace, and to the world. I would like to say that working class, democratic, religious and humanitarian movements all over the world have shown great understanding and sympathy with our people. A striking illustration of the depth and widespread nature of this support was the recent crisis in connection with the Olympic Games. Our Party issued an appeal on this matter, which was circulated during the Consultative Meeting here. I would like, here, comrades, to express the profound gratitude of our Party and our people for all the support which we received all over the world, and which forced Mr. Brundage and the ageing aristocrats who dominate the I.O.C. to abandon their outrageous decision to invite apartheid South Africa to the Games. It was a notable victory and we thank our fraternal Parties in the socialist countries and in the capitalist countries for the part they, together with other anti-racialist, progressive forces, played.

I do not want in this meeting to raise a number of other important questions of African affairs which we think should be featured in our conference and our agenda. Other comrades from Africa are here, and no doubt they will raise some of these questions.

RACIALISM

Another issue, I think, and a related one, is the question of racialism. I say it is related, because the Africans and the people of African descent, are the victims of racial discrimination, racial insults and indignities in many crucial areas in the world. And I want to say two things very emphatically:

1. Africans, whether in Africa or anywhere else in the world, are showing in deed and in action that they are no longer prepared to tolerate treatment and attitudes that have their roots in slavery and colonialism.

2. It is the task of the Communists, anywhere and everywhere, to enter fully and wholeheartedly into the fight against racism, in theory and in practice, to launch a world campaign which will penetrate deeply into the masses who are infected by, and carriers of this disease of racialism, expose its lies and its fallacies to uphold the principles of human dignity and human equality which are basic to Marx's and Lenin's scientific and revolutionary outlook.

In this connection, I want to touch briefly on the remarkable movement, taking many forms, both violent and non-violent, for national liberation among the Negro people in the United States of America. It is a widely ranging and varied movement expressed by many different types of leaders from that remarkable man whom the world has tragically lost—Dr. Martin Luther King—or by the famous boxer, Muhammed Ali, a member of the Muslim movement, who is suffering because he stood up against the Vietnam war, by the young spokesmen for Black Power, or by the revolutionary labour movement expressed by our fraternal Communist Party in the U.S.A. But whatever these shadings of difference: one thing is clear: this movement challenges the very roots of U.S. imperialism, and we must support it.

TONE AND CONTENT

There is one final matter I want to speak about when discussing the tone and content of our meeting and whatever statements or actions it may decide upon.

There is a certain cautious and 'defensive' character in some of the things we say and do on certain issues. Whatever the reasons for it, and I think we can understand them, such an attitude is fatal if we want to win the enthusiastic following of the millions of oppressed people and the revolutionary youth.

In this connection and as an illustration I want to say a word about the attitude we sometimes adopt towards certain widespread and well-known tendencies of petit-bourgeois 'ultra-revolutionism' and 'neo-Blanquism', those who are for ever attacking and criticising our Parties for alleged conservatism, reformism and even treachery.

Now, comrades, we all know very well that—by and large, and with the exception of certain reformist trends which may have manifested themselves in this or that Party from time to time—by and large our Marxist-Leninist movement has been and remains the most dynamic, revolutionary movement the world has ever known.

If we reject certain adventurous and unreal proposals, it is not

because we shrink from the struggle, but because we consider such proposals, in many cases, to be untimely and likely to fail.

But all too often we seem to be arguing against armed struggle, *in general*. I do not propose for a moment that we should try to compete with certain irresponsible adventurers in demagogy or fiery talk which never proceeds to action. What I do propose is that always when we discuss such questions and, Comrades, we must discuss such questions, we must not brush them under the carpet; they are vital issues of our times, and when we do discuss them we must avoid talking like bourgeois liberals or pacifists. We must not brush aside, or treat with disrespect and impatience, the views of fellow-revolutionaries, even if they are mistaken. We must discuss matters patiently with fellow-revolutionaries, even if we think they are wrong. We must also avoid the habit of talking always as if we have all the answers, as if it is impossible for us to make mistakes. Otherwise we risk losing the support or even the attention, of the militant workers and youth.

SOCIALIST COUNTRIES

I want briefly here to touch on the position of our comrades in the socialist countries, especially in the Soviet Union.

Our Party warmly supports the proposals, made here by those comrades who say our documents should draw attention to the exceptional importance of the Soviet Union, the very heartland, fortress and inspiration of the revolution; of the socialist camp, of the struggle for national liberation and independence, of the militant labour movement.

There may be many leaders in the world today who, for various reasons, like to snipe at the Soviet Union but who forget, or want to hide, that all the great advances of our times, the very independence of many countries, owe an incalculable debt to the existence, the strength, the never failing vigilance and devotion to proletarian internationalism, of the socialist Soviet Union.

I want to say, here, that the leaders of our struggle and our guerrilla fighters are very conscious and deeply grateful for the warm brotherly support, political and material, of the governments and people of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries.

This is reality and to ignore this reality is to make sure of committing blunders.

Comrades, the myth that our movement is controlled from Moscow, under the conductors' baton, has always been spread by the bourgeoisie and is now also supported by some who are in our ranks, but who themselves are by no means innocent of trying to control foreign Communist Parties. We, who have been present at those meetings

this year, know from our own experience how groundless this myth is, we know the modest and truly comradely position consistently adopted by the delegation of the C.P.S.U.

We think that the world-wide celebrations last November of the 50th anniversary of the October Revolution, demonstrated the love and confidence which the masses everywhere have towards the Soviet Union. And it is the duty of our movement to develop, inform and encourage these feelings towards the Soviet Union and towards all the socialist countries. Socialism is no longer an abstraction: it is a living reality in many countries of Europe, Asia and even now in Cuba, off the coast of the U.S.A.

At the same time, we cannot overlook that the socialist countries themselves are not static: they are continuously developing, changing, adopting new economic forms, new ways of developing democracy and stimulating the participation of the masses in government, in justice, in administration—surely the heart of socialist democracy. This reflects a ferment, a process, constant new thinking.

I want, here, to associate myself with the remarks of the representative of the C.P. of India on these questions. I feel that here again we have a problem which we must grasp firmly, understand and explain—not sweep under the carpet.

I have one concluding observation to make here. It has been emphasised again and again that our Parties are independent. I do not contest this. We feel that our Party is independent, that no one threatens or can threaten our independence.

But we feel also that all our Parties are interdependent, that in a real, objective sense, we are dependent on one another. That means that we are responsible, not only to our members and our Central Committees, but also to the international working class, the Communist movement and to our brother parties.

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